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The Tech
Established 1881

WEATHER, p. 5
TUE: 87°F | 68°F
Mostly sunny
WED: 92°F | 69°F
Mostly sunny
THU: 90°F | 71°F
Chance storms late

Volume 136, Number 18

Tuesday, July 12, 2016

COURTESY OF HAROLD MELLOR

Random Hall's roof caught fire on June 21, 2016, displacing the summer residents of the dorm.

Fire sends Random residents packing for New House June 21

Cambridge Fire Department has not determined cause, dorm is set to reopen in time for fall semester

By Emma Bingham
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

A fire caused significant damage to the Random Hall roofdeck on June 21 and students were relocated to New House after a brief stay in Next House. As of press time, the Cambridge Fire Department had not yet officially determined the cause of the fire.

Repairs will be made to the roof as well as parts of the building that were damaged by water and smoke. "Drop-ceilings and carpeting will be replaced in damaged areas, and walls will be patched and painted where necessary," Matthew Bauer, Special Assistant to the Dean in DSL, said in an email to The Tech.

Repairs are planned to be completed mid-August and Random will be open again by fall.

It is not yet clear what will happen to Random's roofdeck. "Before any action can be taken on restoring or replacing the roofdeck, the City of Cambridge must weigh in on the plans," Bauer said.

Buildings in Cambridge are no longer allowed to have roofdecks, so Random's roofdeck is grandfathered in.

Residents expressed concern about how much MIT can spend before it is required to bring the entire building up to disability code. However, officials from DSL explained the difference between remediation and renovation. The former, which is what will happen at Random, is simply repairing damage from causes such as fire or storms. The latter,

Random, Page 5

More than 500 signed on against ban on freshmen in Senior House

Senior House president Sarah Melvin supports many of chancellor's plans, shares similar worries on student health

By Karleigh Moore
EDITOR

Since the announcement on June 10 that Senior House will not house freshmen during the 2016-2017 school year, many students have penned blog posts and open letters to Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart PhD '88.

The authors opposed the new policy, expressings concerns about the decision-making process and citing positive experiences they had at the dorm.

Concerns about data sources

The chancellor says that the change was "data-driven" but will not publicly release data beyond graduation statistics the registrar provided.

No confidential information from MIT Mental Health and Counseling has been used, and any confidential data that has been used will not be published or shared, said Barnhart in an email to The Tech last Friday.

This is in light of a petition that has collected signatures from current and former Senior House residents calling for the MIT administration to disclose any use of confidential medical data in their decision-making process.

"[I]n recent years, MIT has participated in surveys that asked questions about drug use on campus," the chancellor said.

"The administration's surveys are conducted ethically, following our internal institutional research board (COUHES) protocol and consistent with the practices among our peer institutions."

Some students pointed out that a recent MIT survey, the 2015 Healthy Minds survey, asked about drug use but did not ask participants to disclose the dorm or specific residence they lived in, and wondered where the administration derived the dorm-specific information, if that survey was used.

Senior House, Page 10

Nelson assumes role as new VP of Student Life

Former Colgate dean will tackle Senior House turnaround, help revise the Good Samaritan policy

By Emma Bingham and Karleigh Moore
EDITORS

Suzy M. Nelson, new vice president and dean for student life, began her tenure July 1.

In her new job, Nelson says her "focus is on how the out-of-class experience promotes student learning and growth." She aims to work with faculty, staff, and students to "develop a campus environment and co-curricular experiences that help students thrive emotionally, intellectually, and physically."

Nelson will oversee the Division of Student Life, which encompasses a wide range of departments, such as DAPER, Residential Life & Dining, the Office of Student Citizenship, Student Support Services, Student Activities Office, and Campus Activities Complex.

Over the next few months, Nelson will be working closely with Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart PhD '88 on implementing the Senior House turnaround and revising the Good Samaritan policy.

Nelson said that her first day on the job was great.

Nelson, Page 10

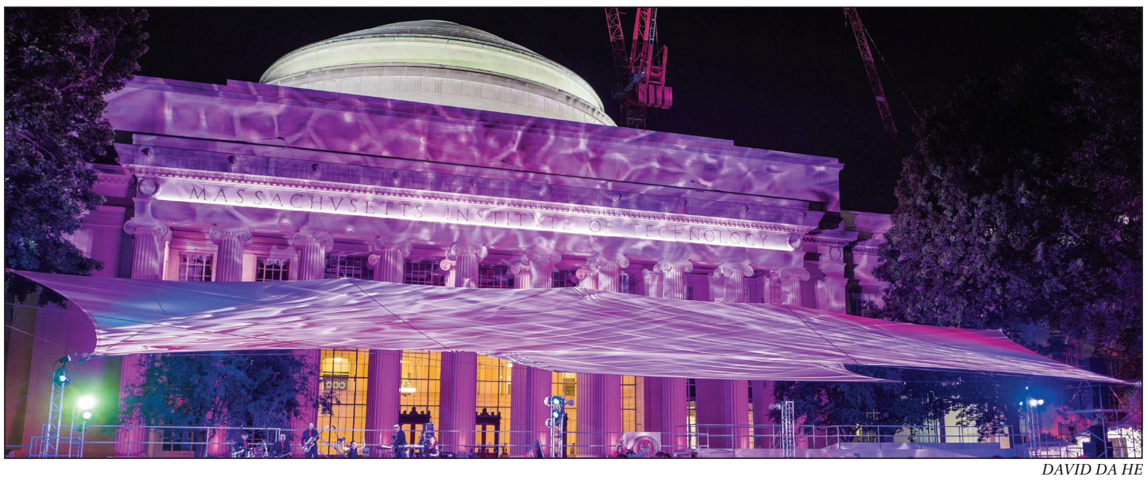
IN SHORT

This number of *The Tech* was scheduled to appear in print last Thursday, but its printing was ultimately postponed due to logistical difficulties. Most of the content herein had already appeared on *thetech.com* by Thursday morning.

Students have until Sept. 15 to waive the MIT Student Extended Insurance Plan for the next academic year.

The shapeshifting statue that temporarily stood in the park on the former site of Bexley was removed last Thursday.

Send news and tips to *news@tech.mit.edu.*



DAVID DA HE

MIT alumni, faculty, staff, and students gather in Killian Court on June 4 for the 2016 Toast to Tech! festivities, which included dancing, live music, and fireworks.

DSL realignment consolidates support resources

In an effort to improve coordination between student support resources, four existing programs will be combined into a new department under the DSL: S3, VPR, Student Disability Services (SDS), and Community Development and Substance Abuse (CDSA).

"We must strengthen the connections between residential life and student support; and we must proactively reach the students we know are more likely to need our help," Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart PhD '88 said in an email announcing the change on July 1.

David Randall, who will head the new department as senior associate dean for student support and wellbeing, said that bringing together student support resources would "improve collaboration and coordination" behind the scenes, but that student interactions with each of these programs would remain largely unchanged.

Students will still be able to access these resources through the same means, and the locations of the offices will not change. VPR, previously part of MIT Medical, will remain a confidential resource.

"One of my main priorities is to build trust with the students," he said.

VPR, SDS, and CDSA will also continue to be led by Kate McCarthy, Kathleen Monagle, and Don Camelio, respective-

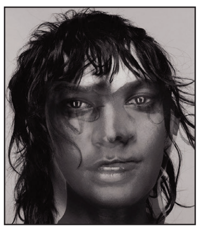
DSL, Page 8

MLB ALL-STAR PLAYERS CHOSEN

Controversy brews over practice of fan voting.
SPORTS, p. 12

SENIOR HOUSE NEWS GALVANIZES COMMUNITY.

Students, faculty, and alumni write letters to the MIT administration about Senior House. **OPINION, p. 2**



POLITICS PERMEATES ALBUM

Read our review of Anohni's *Hopelessness*.
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BEREZIN TO HEAD RANDOM

Dorm will also receive new RLADs, GRTs.
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The Tech (ISSN 0148-9607) is published on Thursdays during the academic year (except during MIT vacations) and monthly during the summer by The Tech, Room W20-483, 84 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Mass. 02139. Subscriptions are $50.00 per year (third class). **POSTMASTER:** Please send all address changes to our mailing address: The Tech, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029. **TELEPHONE:** Editorial: (617) 253-1541. Business: (617) 258-8324. Facsimile: (617) 258-8226. *Advertising, subscription, and typesetting rates available.* Entire contents © ***2016 The Tech***. *Printed by Turley Publications, Inc.*

Letters to members of the MIT Administration

Students and alumni respond to the decisions that will affect Senior House

Editor's Note: Below is a small sample of the many letters sent by MIT students and alumni responding to the administration's decisions that affect Senior House. Many of these letters have been shortened from their original versions, and all are reprinted here with permission from their authors. More full-length letters are available on the Senior House website.

Chancellor,

I'm only two weeks into my internship. Today in the middle of the workday several MIT alumni approached me: "Are you okay? Do you want to take a few hours before dealing with work? What dorm do you live in?" I had no idea what they were talking about. "Check your email."

When I interviewed for internships and when I talk to colleagues/friends about my MIT experience, only a small portion of the conversation consists of academics. I made things that worked; I made things that broke; I gained a deeper understanding of materials and machine design by intentionally making things that worked then breaking them. I helped design a rollercoaster, organized its construction, tore it down. I am currently living in an apartment in California with a Moving Day collapsable kayak that I designed and partly built in my dorm's basement. When I talk about MIT, I talk not only about things I've tried but also the friends I made and the amazing things they've done. Some of these friends graduate in the prescribed four years. Some take gap years, time on leave, or extra internship time. Some change their interests and major halfway through and rush through to graduation. Some finish early.

MIT is unique. Its current students and its alumni have affinities to their dorms like other schools have school pride. I like our diverse dorm culture. I like that MIT's incoming students are currently treated as adults able to choose their own living environments with the freedom to expand comfort zones, find a niche and not worry about fitting in, and/or a little bit of both. As a freshman, I especially appreciated living with a "family" of upperclassmen to support me as I fumbled around MIT. As I gained experience and knowledge, I appreciated that MIT gave its students more freedom to try and make new things than any other school I've seen. Now, I appreciate meeting alumni and discovering that they too take pride in their living groups and their time at MIT. Alumni who have never overlapped with me care about what is happening to Senior Haus and by extension to the undergraduate community and how the news affects me.

I am privileged. I'm straight; I'm a natural US domestic; I have a supportive, stable family that with financial aid allows me to not worry about money, identity (race, gender, or otherwise), and drama. I came into college with robust mental and physical health. I made friends fairly easily and have not had to be their sole support link for mental health or otherwise. I knew fairly early on what I wanted to do with my life and therefore have had a straightforward curriculum. My vices are mundane: caffeine most days, alcohol maybe once or twice a month, overambitious schedules every other term. I'm on track to graduating within four years with little issue, but my path was relatively easy. Others walk harder paths, and by living with them I am lucky to have gained some perspective.

I am biased. I live in East Campus, so when I look at the data presented as evidence for illicit drug use as a causal reason for lower graduation rates (of people who have chosen Senior House as a first-term dorm) I am skeptical. Senior Haus, characteristic of the East Side dorms, presents itself as a welcoming environment for, and has a higher concentration of, students exploring new identities (in gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) than they had at home often resulting in internal/external conflict that has to be dealt with along with academics. But I won't be hypocritical and only consider some data and not others: Senior Haus, characteristic of the East Side dorms, also presents itself as a welcoming environment for, and has a higher concentration of, students exploring new experiences like drugs. Some of these drugs are legal (I like caffeine and alcohol and exercise-rush), and some are not. I won't argue the correlation between living groups and lower graduation rates, though I question the validity of using first-living-group instead of most-time-spent-with-living-group, which completely ignores FSILGs (generally not an option to incoming freshmen) and transfers. I also question the leap of assigning drug use as the primary causal reason for lower graduation rates, since I can think of so many other factors.

> **I am afraid outsiders will look at East Campus and our scary wooden structures, dyed hair, weird traditions, and say "These people could better spend their time studying."**

I am privileged and biased. My use of drugs is all legal, I have few major stresses in my life, and I have had the joy of experiencing East Campus and make friends who also have pride in their living group and MIT. I am privileged because East Campus still has freshmen and the ability to build things, knock things down, and continue to develop East Campus culture towards its residents' interests. Bexley was not so lucky. New House is not so lucky. And now, Senior Haus will no longer be so lucky. I am biased because I am afraid outsiders will look at East Campus and our scary wooden structures, dyed hair, weird traditions and say "These people could better spend their time studying." I am afraid that if this continues maybe conversations between MIT summer interns and their colleagues will only consist of classwork and not creative personal projects. I am biased because after talking to fellow interns and colleagues, I think the undergraduate experiences of Caltech and Harvard are honestly boring. That was my impression as a prospective freshman; now I'm at MIT.

I'm still a student. I haven't advanced enough in a career to completely support myself, much less have the ability to influence MIT policy with donations. I want to go on to grad school, and so will continue to have very little influence for quite some time. As a student, I don't have to consider external factors that would pressure me to emphasize graduating in four years. As a student, I am biased towards treating freshman as adults and letting them continue to choose their living groups — even if data is provided that suggests one living group has a significantly lower graduation rate than others. I think disallowing freshmen to join a living group is a severe blow to the community and implore the Chancellor to reconsider this action. The Chancellor has a responsibility and advocacy for undergraduate education and student life; going directly to disallowing freshmen instead of substance-education programs or other measures seems more like cutting support as opposed to providing it.

Sometimes I look back and think I've done a lot for East Campus and MIT student life. Sometimes I look back and think I've done very little.

I am only one voice affiliated with only one dorm, but I hope MIT will give future undergraduates as rich of an experience as it has given me.

Thank you for your time,
Ava Chen '17

Dear Chancellor Barnhart,

1. How is it known that the lower Senior House graduation rate is due to the Senior House environment rather than other factors such as common demographics and/or risk factors among those choosing as freshmen to live in Senior House?

2. Is it possible that Senior House could be fostering HIGHER graduation rates for the set of students who, as freshmen, self-select as Senior House residents due to a high degree of sympathetic and beneficial peer support among a group sharing common factors such as demographics, personality, sexuality, and world view, which may predispose them to higher risk of failing to graduate?

3. Is it possible that forced dispersion of freshmen who would otherwise choose to live in Senior House could, by denying the critical opportunity for sympathetic peer support, INCREASE the risk of failure to graduate for this subpopulation?

As someone who has successfully practiced multivariate data analysis professionally over the course of several decades, I am alarmed that you mislabel graduation rates as "data" rather than as outcomes. I am equally alarmed that, should the answer to question 3 above be in the affirmative, it would be very difficult to detect and measure the additional harmful outcomes which the new Senior House freshmen housing policy would inflict on the affected students.

I am very concerned that dispersing more vulnerable students to other dormitories — students who would otherwise choose, as freshmen, to live in Senior House with those they perceive as highly sympathetic and supportive because of shared demographics, personality, sexuality, and worldview — may deprive them of precisely the kind of support that increases their chances of success.

It may be far better to focus on ways of enhancing the success of those living at Senior House without eliminating what may be the most critically important benefit available to those freshmen: feeling at home and living among supportive peers in Senior House.

Respectfully,
Richard Kramer '75

OPINION POLICY

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Editor's Note: Senior House president Sarah Melvin posted the following letter on the dorm website.

Dear Chancellor Barnhart,

I too am troubled by the statistics you shared with the MIT community this past Friday. Few people care about the health and success of Senior House residents more than myself. I know many of the stories behind the numbers you cite; where you see statistics, I see faces.

> **I know many of the stories behind the numbers you cite; where you see statistics, I see faces.**

I would like to say that I am grateful that you are in support of a dedicated mental health professional for Senior House. This is something that we as a community have requested for years, and I only wish it could have happened sooner. I also applaud the expansion of S^3 services, which student groups have been working toward, and I think that all dorms could benefit from this program.

However, I think some of your proposals are potentially harmful for student wellbeing. As you are aware, Senior House contains a very large queer population. LGBT freshmen and freshmen who are questioning and confused about their gender identity and sexual orientation often choose to live in Senior House because they know that they will be accepted by their neighbors. These students often come from backgrounds and high schools where they felt marginalized and isolated, but in Senior House they find a place where they are no longer outcasts. It is incredibly important for students to feel safe and accepted where they live — and Senior House has played this role for many of its queer residents. I, and many other current residents, feel it is extremely important that freshman are given the choice to live in our community. It is also essential to acknowledge that the LGBTQ population that is so integral to the Senior House community is at significantly greater risk for mental illness and substance abuse, and we must provide greater support for these students.

I share your goal of improving academic performance among Senior House residents, decreasing drug use, and fostering supportive communities. Below is a list of proposals that I believe are well suited to reach this goal:

1. Senior House receives a dedicated mental health professional, and all consultations between students and this mental health professional will be HIPAA compliant. Many residents come to MIT with existing mental health issues; providing them with accessible medical care is crucial to their success at MIT.

2. All current Senior House GRTs are allowed to remain in Senior House GRT apartments. GRTs are an essential part of the student support structure. Many residents already have established relationships with our GRTs and feel comfortable going to them when they are struggling.

3. Senior House has S^3 office hours within the dorm. Ideally this program is expanded to all dorms, as all MIT students could benefit from it.

> **I share your goal of improving academic performance among Senior House residents, decreasing drug use, and fostering supportive communities.**

4. Mandatory prevention programs are created and run by our mental health professional, that outline the risks of drug and alcohol use and provide information about mental health and substance abuse resources on campus. This program is required for all residents and will run annually for new residents. A committee of students is formed to work under the direction of our mental health professional, to engage in ongoing improvement of these materials and programs, with the aim of creating programs that have real impact.

5. Dedicated study spaces are created in Senior House, similar to the space that exists in Maseeh. Currently, Senior House lacks this resource, and therefore, studying and socializing often occupy the same spaces. It is crucial that we provide residents with spaces designed specifically for academic use in order to promote better study practices within the community.

6. A peer tutoring program is created to run in this space, where residents volunteer to tutor other residents who may be struggling in classes where they excelled. While statistics show that Senior House residents take longer to graduate, the dorm is also home to many students who excel in some of the most rigorous courses of study at MIT. Some of these students have expressed interest in providing academic support for other residents.

7. An Alumni-Mentorship program is established with the goal of connecting successful Senior House alumni with current residents to provide them with academic and career advice.

8. Freshmen, while not given Senior House as an option in the housing lottery, will be allowed to FYRE into the dorm if they still wish to live in Senior House despite these statistics. Upperclassmen will also be given the option to transfer into the dorm. It is crucial for MIT students, especially freshmen, to find housing on campus where they feel completely accepted by their peers, and I believe Senior House provides this for many students. I also believe that freshmen are necessary for a successful turnaround in Senior House. In every living group, freshmen are the future. They revitalize the community, direct its growth, and are most capable of designing a positive future for the dorm.

9. A freshmen mentorship program will be established that matches freshmen with upperclassmen who share similar academic interests and have excelled in their coursework.

10. A "turnaround team" chaired by Chancellor Barnhart and consisting of faculty, campus student leaders, Senior House residents, and Senior House GRTs, will help implement these changes and establish clearly defined metrics to evaluate their success. Senior House residents will work with the Chancellor to choose dedicated members of the MIT community to serve on this committee.

11. The Chancellor's Office and turnaround team will oversee the process of procuring appropriate funds to implement these changes. Funds should not come from the House budget or from increasing cost of living in Senior House, an MIT residence that has historically been home to many low-income students.

> **This process has been disrespectful to MIT student government as an institution and to the student leaders who work tirelessly for their peers.**

As troubled as I am by these statistics, I am also deeply concerned about the lack of transparency and student input in decisions that so greatly affect the lives of MIT students. I have already stated that I care greatly about the residents of Senior House. I also know their struggles and their support structures. I have long been concerned about mental health and substance abuse issues in Senior House, and I have thought extensively about these issues and how to best aid my community. I am frankly offended that I was not consulted about this matter and that my input was not valued. This process has been disrespectful to MIT student government as an institution and to the student leaders who work tirelessly for their peers. If your intention really is to engage the community, it is important that trust is built and that decisions are reached together. In the present state, students are fearful of the administration, and this fear will need to be addressed before we can start working towards our shared goals.

I want to again emphasize that I share your concern for the Senior House community. I would like to work with you and others to establish creative solutions for the unique challenges faced by the residents of Senior House.

Sincerely,
Sarah Melvin '18
Senior House President

Dear Chancellor Barnhart,

At times, to live in a dorm like East Campus is to nail the inside of the soul to the wall. For the administration to take stock of these bleeding walls and then recoil is for the administration to finally witness the same face it bared — at least in some part (and in many different forms) — to all its students. To me, well beyond its murals, the walls were an easel, a prison, a tantrum, a splash zone, and a lifeboat. They absorbed and echoed my love, my hatred, my collateral damage, and as they pressed in I pressed them back and I grew stronger, and I thanked them for keeping me sheltered under snowy Boston skies in the only life I knew how to live.

Many dark murals, themes, mythologies, and stories are historic and cherished on the East Side of campus because they testify to the fact that for MIT to build the students that it does, it has always had a dark side, and it always will. And to live next to these things and not meet their creators is to be reminded every day that there were students — nearly all of them, in fact — who did make it out despite their pain, and in the end, nearly all of us will too.

Chancellor Barnhart and other administrators dislike that there are many students who must take more than four years to escape from our coloring-book-wallpaper East Side asylums, and yet are simultaneously excited by the now apparently High Art that they produce. To see this administration's confliction is to see it attack MIT itself. It is to see MIT having a crisis not with the dorms, but with the very shadow that it casts upon them. It is to see them hold down and order the student-sufferer to get in line and suffer like Normal People.

Why does the East Side have the "scary dorm"? Because MIT is scary and dark, and the East Side is where we have allowed that truth to shine most brightly.

> **Administrators are proud to showcase East Campus when it builds a roller coaster, but they do not admit to the MIT roller coaster that built those in East Campus.**

To take on the "responsibility to provide students with an environment where [they] can succeed academically" is to accept that that environment is unique to each student, that it is in resonance with the many faces that MIT itself takes, and that it will not always be as Technicolor as the administration might dream. In their MIT News emails, administrators are proud to showcase East Campus when it builds a roller coaster, but they do not admit to the MIT roller coaster that built those in East Campus. I know that the administration is fiercely proud of us (or at least the parts of us they currently understand), and that their concern for our wellbeing is genuine and sincere, but they betray a lack of vision, trust, and self-awareness.

Looking back, IHTFP — and I am forever grateful to have lived in a dorm that admitted it. I know I wouldn't have made it otherwise.

Always in good faith and as one voice among many,
Maximilien Baas-Thomas '16

Dear Chancellor Barnhart,

I'd like to share a couple anecdotes of why freshmen need to find a home they can be happy in.

As a freshman, I had visited most of the dorms during CPW. By far, I had the best experience in Next House, and yet when it came to choosing, I put down Maseeh as my first choice — it was a safer choice, closer to campus, still new enough that the incoming freshmen classes would make up a disproportionate share of the residents and thus in theory a better dorm for freshmen to live in ... and it was okay, but I struggled. I didn't find I was making a lot of friends there — my corner of the hall had about 14 freshmen and two upperclassmen. I never connected with any of them, and the freshmen never really came out of our rooms or hung out in the lounge.

In the spring, I did abysmally. I overextended myself in many extracurriculars, searching for the community that I didn't have in Maseeh, and I eventually found it toward the end of the semester, in the Association of Taiwanese Students and Next House. ATS was incredibly welcoming, and I made incredible friends there. Much of ATS exec was living in Next House at the time, so I began hanging out there, and I finally discovered home. The upperclassmen were incredible — mind-bogglingly successful, inspirational, and caring.

> **Finding a home where you are welcomed and celebrated is instrumental to success at the Institute.**

This particular set of upperclassmen, mostly 2014s and 2015s, was key in revolutionizing Next House's culture, most notably starting Next Big Thing and Next Haunt, our giant building event for CPW and REX, and our escape the room haunted house, respectively. They built infolounge, a dashboard we set up in the lounge to see important events, upcoming birthdays, how long until the next shuttle, or even the menu in dining that day. They also built Nigel, an exit sign with googly eyes that we installed in the lounge, which also happened to be an AI that could talk to you, query WolframAlpha and Wikipedia, knew the birthdays and hometowns of everyone on hall, as well as many other things, and probably approached Siri in ability, built by a few college students over the course of a couple weekends. Incidentally, Victor, one of the primary founding members of all of these things, graduated in 4.5 years — he took an extra semester to attempt to add a minor in Course 2, as well as to take 2.009. Hunter, another instrumental figure in many Next House activities, graduated in 5 years — she helped direct Next Act and was one of the leads for Next Big Thing.

Seeing these wonderful engineering treasures inspired my to change majors — I thought as a freshman that I wanted to be a chemistry major, but after seeing the incredible things Next had built, I switched to 2A. After realizing my interests lie a bit more in computer science, I added 6 as a double major, and it's been an incredible decision for me.

Finding a place that you belong is difficult — many students come into MIT and exit MIT as very different people, but finding a home where you are welcomed and celebrated is instrumental to success at the Institute. Preventing freshmen from choosing Senior Haus is a huge disservice to them because many would have found a home there, so I urge you to reconsider this decision.

To end, I'd like to ask a few questions, to understand the process better and figure out some ways to move forward.

> **Preventing freshmen from choosing Senior Haus is a huge disservice to them because many would have found a home there, so I urge you to reconsider this decision.**

1. Could you release the full set of data that would include confounding factors to graduation rate, so that these may be considered appropriately?

2. Why were no current students or GRTs contacted to be involved in the decision-making process?

Thank you for your time,
Landon Carter '17

Chancellor Barnhart,

I am writing today as I am deeply disturbed by the handling of, and methods of obtaining, the data on student drug abuse used to support the argument behind the new measures announced Friday. I'm a Senior Haus resident, but my opinions are my own.

An extensive mental health survey was given to students in spring 2015. This survey covered questions on the student's financial situation, academic performance, drug use, sexual habits, sexual assault history, religion, self-image, and of course, mental health. Students were told that the survey was confidential, and that their candid input would help improve the MIT student experience.

The aggregated results of this survey — namely, self-reported data on drug use — were presented to the Chancellor several months ago and used as part of the rationale for the measures announced on Friday to Senior House residents and the wider MIT Community — including alumni, faculty, and parents. The Chancellor explained this to GRTs and house residents in a June meeting held after the announcement.

I do not think it right that these measures were made in the name of student mental health without consulting a single student. As many have expressed, they seem highly punitive. An estimated 30 empty rooms, with no freshmen or transfers in a house of 146, and only vague indications of future policy reconsideration is the start of depopulation, and an existential threat. And I find it especially galling that this survey data, given voluntarily and in trust, would be used against the student community in this fashion. The survey questions were incredibly personal in a number of ways and their answers should have been treated with more consideration for the students who believed that they were better informing mental health professionals, not providing fodder for widespread public shaming and the breakup of their community.

> **I do not think it right that these measures were made in the name of student mental health without consulting a single student.**

I agree that the results are troubling, and we should definitely work on understanding and fixing them. I don't think the culture is perfect and residents have been working on ways to improve the community and make it a more welcoming environment. We would have loved the opportunity to consider more quantitative data and use that to implement new and better methods. But we were not told, and I am deeply unsettled by the way that the administration has chosen to approach this.

Haus residents have been pushing for additional mental health resources for years. The measures given by the administration — which they informed us were non-negotiable — involved removing GRTs, who are integral to our community support structure, and displacing them from their apartments in favor of live-in administrative staff. The students provide input in selecting the GRTs in a months-long process over the school year. One such GRT, chosen over the last few months, had been informed that she no longer had a job. Only after extensive re-negotiation between residents and administration were we allowed to keep our GRTs in their designated apartments.

We have long-standing community interfaces with the administration in the form of the House Team — the GRTs, the House President and different student committees — for providing student input on issues which affect us. They were all notified on Friday, after the fact, even after The Tech interview given by the Chancellor, which was in the morning. No one had even tried to discuss the graduation rate statistic — a statistic whose utility, both as a measure of success and as a mathematically sound statistical inference, has been questioned by the community — with us before putting out a press release and emailing it to our parents.

The Chancellor's office has access to self-reported data on which dorm is the most depressed, which living group has the lowest aspirations or the lowest GPA. Which living group experiences the most sexual assault. Which living group is drinking the most. And the administration has demonstrated that they find it acceptable to unilaterally decide what actions to take from this, without even the pretense of input from the students affected.

I think these survey results are incredibly valuable and have the potential to bring aid to where it is needed. Chancellor Barnhart, I respect that you are taking action and pushing for improvements. But it must be done through working with the students affected, or else you will lose their trust entirely. Unfortunately, the handling of this survey data may have already severely crippled administrative ability to get honest feedback.

As a final, important question: question A6 on the survey asks about living situation, but breaks it down by 'on-campus residence hall,' 'frat or sorority,' 'ILG,' and others. We were certainly never told that additional information would to be tied to our survey answers. How did you acquire the dorm-specific numbers?

Thank you all for reading,
Anvita Pandit '17

Dear Chancellor Barnhart and Professor Bertschinger,

I am writing to add my voice to the growing chorus of concern about MIT's plans for Senior House.

I am an alum from Senior House, of course. I graduated class of 1993, Course 8, with a reasonable GPA of 4.6/5, within the standard four years. I also later brought my NSF Astronomy & Astrophysics Postdoctoral Fellowship to MIT in 2002 to 2005, before I was hired as a faculty member at the University of Amsterdam, where I am currently an associate professor. I am a success story from MIT, about to join the roughly two percent of female full professors in the hard sciences in the Netherlands, and I guess maybe ten percent in the U.S.

> **I do not believe I would have made it through without the support network I found at Senior House.**

As an academic, who also served for several years as the director of the graduate program in Astronomy & Astrophysics at my university, I completely understand why you are concerned about an anomalously low graduation rate for any dorm. I also understand the need to react in a public way, to satisfy various demands of parents, donors, alumni, and of course, to avoid anything that could adversely affect the reputation for a high-quality education that MIT offers to its students. As a proud product of that education, I have a vested interest in seeing MIT maintain the quality and the special atmosphere that I feel MIT offers, in comparison to all other top tier universities.

However, I do not believe I would have made it through without the support network I found at Senior House. My grades do not reflect the moments of utter despair and panic I sometimes felt, such as in my first semester when I realised that my background in science was nowhere near as strong as seemingly everyone around me. I resented the students who blithely ate whatever they wanted at the student dining halls, when I could only afford a basic plan and then mostly had to cook for myself. I also had to work to support myself, luckily managing to eventually get a paying research job, to which I credit the start of my career. I had to work summers. And I had a mentally ill father who was unemployed, erratic and a cause of great stress. I managed to fund my degree at MIT by working, taking out the largest student loans allowed, receiving a lot of scholarships (thank you MIT!), and using the money my mother could scrape together to match the modest parental contribution (thank you Mom!). But still there were times when it looked like we were not going to manage, and I lived with the stress of wondering if I would have to drop out because of financial reasons.

I believe that Senior House holds a higher concentration of people who, like I did, dedicate a higher fraction of their mental and emotional energy to some kind of struggle, whether it is because they are from an underrepresented group or a lower socioeconomic class (and in many cases, both). I succeeded at MIT because I found people there with whom I did not feel ashamed, who could understand my struggles because they had their own struggles, and where I could just relax and be myself.

Part of the responsibility MIT has in fostering a more diverse student body is to recognize the underlying causes for lower metrics and try to help rather than further stigmatize. The struggles many Senior House students face may correlate with higher incidence of mental illness. Does this contribute to lower graduation rates? Of course it does. Is Senior House the problem, as the approach currently chosen by the MIT administration would suggest? I do not think so.

I am all for an approach that helps students at Senior House get more support, to help them achieve academic success. However, I come out strongly against the decision to close the dorm and prevent incoming freshmen from choosing Senior House. There is no way that this decision can be seen as anything but singling out Senior House as a problem dorm, and it will stigmatize and traumatize exactly the group MIT should want to help. What sign does this send to future applicants from these groups? You would be taking away the chance for new students from nontraditional and diverse backgrounds to find that home away from home, and support network, that may allow them to feel part of a community at MIT and succeed.

> **Part of the responsibility MIT has in fostering a more diverse student body is to recognize the underlying causes for lower metrics and try to help rather than further stigmatize.**

What is happening at Senior House reflects the problems faced by a more diverse student body, and if MIT truly wants to foster "community and equity," closing the most diverse dorm to incoming freshmen simply sends the wrong signal.

Sincerely yours,
Sera Markoff '93

GUEST COLUMN

Browsers' bid for relevance is turning them into time-bombs

The growth of mobile devices and the apps that fuel them has been followed by a decline in browsers, locking more and more of the Internet into silos controlled by giant corporations that love "disruption" when they're the ones doing it, but not so much when they're the ones being disrupted. The browser ecosystem is weaker than it's ever been, and that's made it ripe for predation — and you'll find no better example of it than something happening under MIT's own roof.

To understand what's happening, you need to understand both web standards and a notorious U.S. law called the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA).

MIT has hosted the World Wide Web Consortium, the web's premier open standards body, since its founding in 1994. Unlike other standards bodies, which require members to contribute their relevant patents to a "pool" that is rented out to standards implementers, the W3C pioneered a new, radical approach to patents in standards: members must give their standards-overlapping patents away for free as a condition of participation.

This principled stand, taken when the web was strong and the W3C was flush, meant that for the whole modern life of the web, the core standards for browsers could be implemented by anyone, without fear of a patent suit from the W3C's members.

That is, until the W3C got tangled up in the DMCA.

Passed in 1998, the DMCA contains a provision, section 1201, which makes it a crime to circumvent an "effective means of access control" that sits between users and copyrighted works. In the early days, this was used to punish technologists who made it possible to do things like watch DVDs purchased in one country on a player bought in a different country, but since "copyrighted works" include software, and software is in nearly everything these days, from buildings to voting machines to tractors to insulin pumps, the DMCA has metastasized into every conceivable domain, turning tinkering, interoperability and accessibility into legal minefields.

For more than a decade, browsers have supported DRM piecemeal, with a variety of technologies like Adobe Flash. With the advent of HTML5 and the removal of the NSAPI interface through which these DRMs had run, it seemed possible that online video would follow online music in going DRM-free. Instead, the W3C took the hugely controversial step of agreeing to standardize DRM as part of HTML5, in a standard called Encrypted Media Extensions (EME).

This decision — which Ian Hickson, who formerly maintained HTML5 for the W3C, publicly denounced — means that for the first time, implementing a browser that can play back all the content that is served under W3C standards will require permission from a movie studio.

It gets worse: one of the DMCA's major targets is security researchers, who face legal threats when they disclose defects in DRM (because knowing a defect makes it easier to break the DRM), and security researchers report that they are routinely prevented from disclosing grave defects in everything from medical implants to critical software because of this threat.

The W3C's strategy for "saving the web" from the corporate-controlled silos of apps is to replicate the systems of control that make apps off-limits to innovation and disruption. It's a poor trade-off, one that sets a time-bomb ticking in the web's foundations, making the lives of monopolists easier, and the lives of security researchers and entrepreneurs much, much more perilous.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation, a W3C member, has proposed a compromise that will protect the rights of academics, entrepreneurs, and security researchers to make new browser technologies and report the defects in the old ones: we asked the W3C to extend its patent policy to the DMCA, so that members who participated in making DRM would have to promise not to use the DMCA to attack implementers or security researchers.

But although this was supported by a diverse group of W3C members, the W3C executive did not adopt the proposal. Now, EME has gone to Candidate Recommendation stage, dangerously close to completion. The purpose of HTML5 is to provide the rich interactivity that made apps popular, and to replace apps as the nexus of control for embedded systems, including the actuating, sensing world of "internet of things" devices.

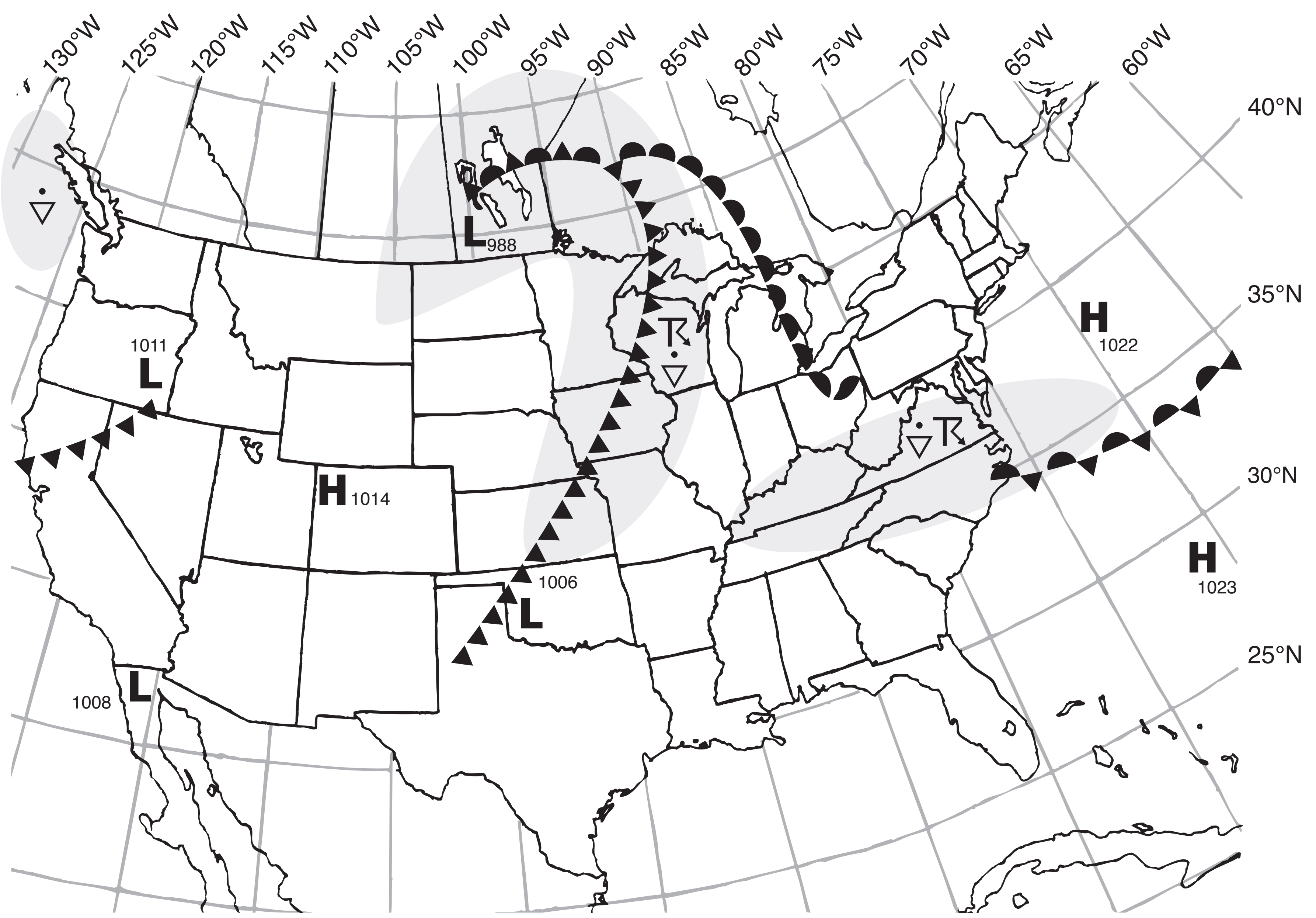
We can't afford to have these devices controlled by a system that is a no-go zone for academic work, security research, and innovative disruption. Although some of the biggest tech corporations in the world today support EME, very few of them could have come into being if EME-style rules had been in place at their inception. A growing coalition of leading international privacy and security researchers have asked the W3C to reconsider and protect the open web from DRM, a proposal supported by many W3C staffers, including Danny Weitzner (CSAIL/W3C), who wrote the W3C's patent policy.

MIT students, researchers and alumni should join them in calling on the W3C to take a stand for an open web that is hospitable to scholarship and innovation.

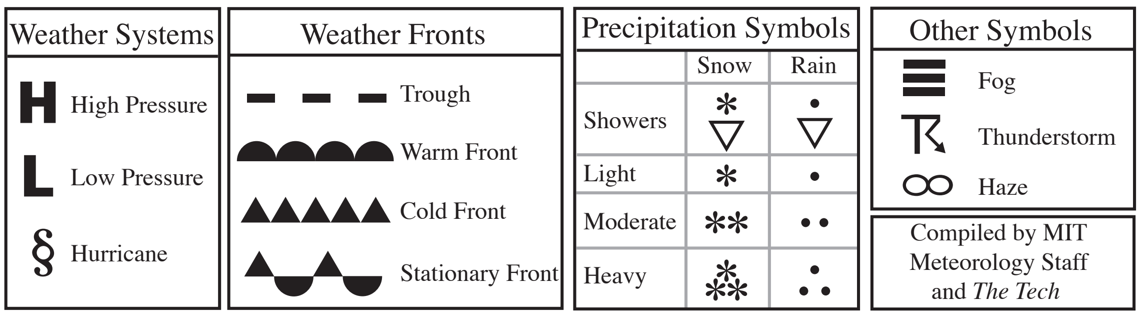
Cory Doctorow is a Special Advisor of the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

WEATHER

Heat to increase throughout next week



Situation for Noon Eastern Time, Friday, June 3, 2016



Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and *The Tech*

By Vince Agard
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

Those who missed the sun's rays over the rainy weekend will have a chance to catch them all this week, as high pressure brings clear skies, heat, and humidity to southern New England. After a dreary weekend during which a cold maritime air mass kept the temperature below 65°F (18°C), this week will present a return to summertime heat. As high pressure builds over the Atlantic Ocean, a deep low pressure system will sweep its way eastward from Saskatchewan into Ontario and Quebec. The result will be a tightening pressure gradient between the high to our southeast and the low to our northwest. This pressure gradient will act as a conveyor belt, with its southwesterly winds bringing hot, humid air up from the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States.

Today will likely be the most enjoyable day of the week to be outside, as sunshine will be abundant, but the peak of the humid air mass will have yet to arrive. Dew points will stay near 60°F (16°C) today, but will increase throughout the remainder of the week before peaking in the lower 70s °F (near 23°C) on Friday. The oppressive heat and humidity at the end of the week will be coupled with the threat of thunderstorms, especially late Thursday through the day on Friday.

Extended Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny. High 87°F (31°C). Winds SW at 5-10 mph, possibly becoming E and cooler in the afternoon.
Tonight: Mostly clear. Low 68°F (20°C).
Tomorrow: Mostly sunny. High 92°F (33°C). Winds SW at 10-15 mph.
Thursday: Sunny with a chance of thunderstorms late. High 90°F (32°C).
Friday: A chance of showers or thunderstorms. High 90°F (32°C).

Fate of Random roofdeck remains to be determined

Move brings residents closer together in bigger dorm, residents suggest name 'New Random'

Random, from Page 1

which would necessitate a whole-building update if MIT wanted to spend over a certain threshold, involves making improvements to the building.

Timeline of events

The fire was reported at 3:03 p.m. that Tuesday afternoon. The Cambridge Fire Department responded and residents were quickly evacuated.

On the evening of June 21, residents gathered in Sidney-Pacific for food and announcements. Starting at 6:30 p.m., small groups were allowed back into Random for 10 minutes each to gather things for the night.

Residents were housed in Next House that night and were provided with sheets and towels.

The next day, residents moved to New House and were again allowed into Random in the evening to gather additional personal items.

Random Hall was opened to residents only on June 23 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Residents were told to pack in moving boxes only the things they would need for the next few weeks, with the exception of those whose rooms were directly affected by fire or water damage, who were told they had to pack up everything in their rooms.

These affected rooms included back rooms on all the floors of the 282 side of the dorm — Bonfire, Clam, Loop, and Destiny. The top floor, Bonfire, was the most affected, with damage in at least five of the twelve rooms on the floor.

On Friday, June 24, Olympia Movers, the same company that helped move New House residents back to New House from the Hyatt in January, moved all the items packed and labelled by Random residents to New House.

Displaced residents adapt to New House

Random resident Katie N. Sedlar '17 has a number of positive feelings about the situation. She thinks DSL did "a pretty reasonable job" helping Random residents move and making sure floors from Random ended up together in New House, among other things.

She knows, however, that the move was a "hassle" for people with full-time jobs. She also misses seeing the cats, who are confined to their owners' rooms for the stay in New House. She will be "very disappointed" if Random isn't open in the fall.

A few nights after the move, residents built a box fort with all the moving boxes and held a Nerf gun fight. Sedlar, who helped organize the event, said it was "the highlight of this whole incident" for her.

Amidst adjusting to a new place, with new kitchen conflicts, different laundry machines, clogged shower drains, and missing paper towels, relocated Random residents are trying to stay optimistic. They even suggested that their new residence be called "New Random."

Sedlar remarked on the way the move has "brought people together."

Another resident, Katie V. Mathison '19, said, "Even though we're in New House, it still feels like Random. Even though we're in a new place, some things never change."

INTERVIEW

The Porch Yellers lament the "Dormpocalypse"

An eventful year in dorm life lends itself to folk song magic

By Karleigh Moore
EDITOR

It's official: we've entered the songwriting stage of the pervasive discontent among students about the state of dorm life on campus.

Last week, The Porch Yellers released their first song, "The Ballad of Dormpocalypse," on dorm lists, sparking lengthy email threads and massive sharing. Its popularity is well deserved.

The Porch Yellers are Eurah Ko '16 (vocals and acoustic guitar), Kim Dauber '18 (vocals), and Jake Gunter '17 (producer, electric guitar, and electric bass).

"Outside of the trio, I also received a lot of help writing and editing lyrics from Lauren St. Hilaire '16, Emily Rosser '16, Rachel Bowens-Rubin '11, and Danny Ben-David '15," Ko said in an email to The Tech.

The band took inspiration from a rather eventful school year as far as dorm life is concerned: the Random Hall fire, the New House pipe bursts, the moratorium on freshman in Senior House, the failed "Bexley bong" (the sculpture near W11 that fell over), and the scrapped plans, fondly referred to as MetX, for a dorm in the Metropolitan Storage Warehouse.

Students have sent emails to administrators, written letters to the editor to The Tech, and have participated in threads upon threads of emails lamenting new policies, strategizing email campaigns, and more. The Porch Yellers' song is the perfect campus catharsis. It's easy to get lost in the details when reading email threads or news articles — in a single song, The Porch Yellers capture a common campus mood. The song packs a powerful punch while still being playful, making clear the eventful and ridiculous happenings of this past year. While MIT has many political and cause-oriented groups, I'd wager that our student body isn't particularly known for collectively getting riled up about politics, but our dorms are an entirely different matter. Here's what The Porch Yellers had to say about their debut song.

The Tech: What was your inspiration? Why did you make this song?

Eurah Ko: I was a little bored post-graduation, and more than a little annoyed at the recent unpreparedness of MIT when it came to dealing with dorms. When Random Hall caught on fire, it was the cherry on top of a situation that seemed like it was from an absurdist comedy. A lot people had remarked online (e.g. Facebook, discussion.mit.edu, mailing lists) that this was the "Dormpocalypse." Some people noticed that the dorms had fallen to air (Bexley tower), fire (Random), and water (New), and that now we just were waiting for a dorm to fall from an earthquake or something. It was basically an episode of Avatar: The Last Airbender.

But yeah, the whole thing seemed like it was ripe for some good old-fashioned storytelling. After all, there are two kinds of initial defense mechanisms to a frustrating situation: anger, and sarcasm. And by the time the Random fire happened, I had already spent all of my anger ranting, so all I had left was a bunch of jokes. Having helped write the 2015 i3 video song for Next House, I thought it would be fun to write a song again.

> **The song packs a powerful punch while still being playful, making clear the eventful and ridiculous happenings of this past year.**

The Tech: How did you decide on the genre? Why a folk song?

EK: It's mostly because my main instrument of choice is the acoustic guitar, and simple folk songs are relatively easier to write and think of instrumentation for. However, after practicing the song a few times with Kim, we realized that the song would sound good done specifically in a "Western" style. We originally had envisioned a simple arrangement of vocals and acoustic guitar, but then Jake used his awesome skills as a producer and instrumentalist to add in a bunch of other things as well (we especially like the horse whinny).

Jake Gunter: When Eurah originally came to me with the idea to record the song, we started brainstorming ideas for instrumentation and influences. We took inspiration from a lot of old country songs, and the soundtracks to Spaghetti Westerns (particularly some of Ennio Morricone's work), so I suggested a few additions that were idiomatic to that style — like the clip-clop percussion and occasional electric guitar riffs. Adding a horse whinny after the line about MetX was originally my idea of a joke — but after I added it in, we took a listen and immediately agreed that it had to stay.

The Tech: Is this the first song that the Porch Yellers made?

EK: Yup! I basically told Kim out of the blue that I had this funny little song, and asked if she wanted to provide vocals and harmonize with me. Then we set out to find a producer who could help us record. Luckily, I had done some recording work with Jake before, and so we spent a night recording in his bedroom setup.

The Tech: Is there a story behind the band name?

EK: Funny story, there were a bunch of other candidates…

- The "Dorm"mat Singers (inspired by The Doormat Singers)
- The Howdy Doody's
- The Fart Noises of MIT
- In Tents
- The Tent Renters
- Tentacular
- The Tentations
- Death to the Grass on Kresge
- How to Succeed at MIT Without Really Trying

The Porch Yellers was eventually chosen to illustrate the fact that we were like a bunch of old people (well, Jake and I, at least) yelling at passersby from porches. We felt like it was true to the spirit of the song.

The Tech: How did the idea coalesce from a "wouldn't it be funny if..." to a finished product?

EK: Lots of boredom, that turned into a Google Doc, that turned into me and other friends trying for hours to get the verses just right, that turned into a full-fledged song complete with a rhythm, lead, and percussion section. I find that I'll muster remarkable amounts of determination and drive for silly projects, and Ballad was one of the silliest things I've ever made. However, I especially thank Jake and Kim for making the final product as finished as it is, because without them this would have just been recorded on an iPhone by myself.

JG: I had the easy job — I just set up a microphone and hit 'record'. But without songwriters like Eurah (and all the wonderful people who helped her), there'd be nothing for poor recording engineers like me to do.

> **The Porch Yellers was eventually chosen to illustrate the fact that we were like a bunch of old people yelling at passersby frm porches.**

The Tech: When should we expect The Porch Yellers' first EP?

EK: Uh, undetermined, since this was supposed to be a one-off thing. However, we do encourage our fellow students and alums to destress through some song and lyric writing, it's quite nice. We're also open to any collaborators that have funny ideas! (Also, rumour has it that there may be a music video in the works! We can neither confirm nor deny this, but it sounds pretty cool.)

JG: Plans may or may not be in the works for a cover of the "Bad Horse" song from Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog.

The lyrics to the song are included courtesy of The Porch Yellers.

First went Bexley, brick and wood
A hundred years, it proudly stood
Public Art went in its place
Then fell flaccid in disgrace

Doubles triples everywhere
DormCon's pulling out its hair
Dorms are falling east and west
Will they ever stand time's test?

Bursting forth went New House pipes
Emails flooded with their gripes
The admins all threw up their hands
And swore this wasn't ever planned

Doubles triples everywhere
DormCon's pulling out its hair
Dorms are falling east and west
Will they ever stand time's test?

Senior Haus was rather queer
Low grad rates sparked admins' fear
No frosh 'til at least the spring
Or new blood for the tire swing

Doubles triples everywhere
DormCon's pulling out its hair
Dorms are falling east and west
Will they ever stand time's test?

Random's roof went up in flame
Bonfire lived up to its name
Sprinklers added to the curse
Fire's bad, (pregnant pause) but water's worse!

(spoken) Just ask New House!

Doubles triples everywhere
DormCon's pulling out its hair
Dorms are falling east and west
Will they ever stand time's test?

Will EC have a real roach quake?
Will Simmons' windows crack and break?
Will zombie hordes overrun Next?
(spoken) Hell, don't get me started on MetX!

Doubles triples quads and quints
Will admins ever get the hint?
Dorms are falling east and west
Will they ever stand time's test?

vs
vs
vs
vs
Have a burning desire to see these teams battle it out? In person?!
Join The Tech!
sports@tech.mit.edu

ALBUM REVIEW

Climate change, foreign policy, and mass surveillance

Anohni delivers a politically charged album

★★★☆☆

Hopelessness

Anohni

Released May 6, 2016

Secretly Canadian

ANOHNI
HOPELESSNESS

COURTESY OF SECRETLY CANADIAN

Anohni released her politically charged solo debut album Hopelessness on May 6, 2016.

By Denis Bozic

STAFF WRITER

Six years after releasing the album *Swanlights* with the ensemble of musicians known as Antony and the Johnsons, the English artist Anohni returns to the music scene, dropping the previous name "Antony Hegarty," and releases her debut solo album *Hopelessness*. As the second openly transgender person who has been nominated for an Academy Award (with Angela Morley being the first), she re-enters the industry not only with a new moniker, but with a new musical style as well. Shifting her work, which was previously rather pastoral and orchestral, to pop-inspired electronic music, Anohni focuses on politics this time in an attempt to make a protest album.

The transition to a new genre is executed flawlessly. Joined by producers Hudson Mohawke and Oneohtrix Point Never, Anohni delivers a successful combination of pounding and captivatingly glitchy synth-pop in "4 Degrees" and "Violent Men," followed by the catchy and peppy songs "Watch Me" and "Execution," in addition to offering ballads like "I Don't Love You Anymore" and euphoric anthems like "Why Did You Separate Me from the Earth?" Her vocal performance is just as effective, with a wide range of emotions, which are vividly portrayed in each song, clearly indicating the promising potential of this album.

Unfortunately, the successful musical production is thrown off balance by the album's draining lyrical content. Despite Anohni's best attempts to deliver a dance protest album that addresses a wide range of topics, from foreign policy and capital punishment to climate change and mass surveillance, her fusion of music and politics instead creates a naive image of a bleak, nihilistic, and 1984-esque society facing impending doom.

"Execution," for example, attempts to showcase the saddening truth that capital punishment is still actively practiced in several countries around the world, but Anohni's simple recital of nations, "Like the Chinese and the Saudis / The North Koreans and The Nigerians," accompanied with the repetitive hook "Execution / Execution / It's an American dream" over a jingle-like melody, renders the song bereft of any emotional maturity. Similarly, in the song "Obama," the weakest track on the album, Anohni directly criticizes the president through verses such as "Now the news is you are spying / Executing without trial" and "All the hope drained from your face / Like children we believed", while periodically chanting the president's last name. Without giving a more diplomatic and well-thought-out criticism of Obama's presidency, she fails to deliver the intended message and instead presents the listeners with a rather unpolished set of opinions.

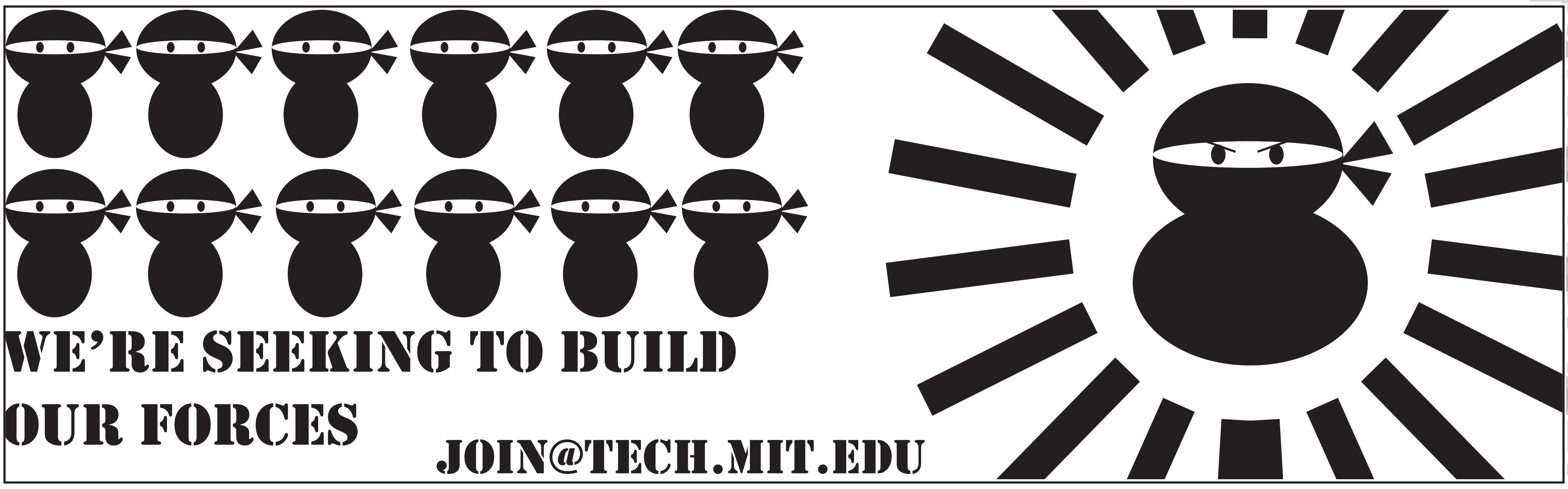
On the other hand, when the lyrics become coated with poetic ambiguity, the album feels undoubtedly triumphant. "I Don't Love You Anymore," the only song on the album that does not have any explicitly political content, highlights Anohni's mastery as a storyteller. When she sings "I was so lonely, all alone / When the phone rang, I wasn't there / When my parents called, I just sat and stared" with a dejected voice, a more vulnerable and visceral side of Anohni is shown, allowing the listeners to feel the gravity of her personal struggles. In "Why Did You Separate Me from the Earth," she succeeds at creating a palpable vision of a dying environment, one that shows the dire repercussions of careless human activities, by singing "I don't want your future / I'll be born before you're born / Why did you separate me, me from the Earth?" Lyrics like these contrast sharply with the bluntness of other songs on the record, and show that poeticism could convey her ideas more effectively.

Blurring the lines between music and politics is not a novelty, and Anohni is certainly not the first musician whose lyrics draw attention to current global issues. Just within England, M.I.A.'s single, "Borders," which addresses the European migrant crisis, created controversy when it was released at the end of 2015, and, more recently, PJ Harvey's track "Community of Hope," from this year's album The Hope Six Demolition Project, drew criticism from D.C. politicians, who considered Harvey's apocalyptic depiction of Ward 7 as incorrect and incomplete.

Much of the criticism directed at politically charged music usually stems from observations that artists themselves do not offer any solutions to issues presented in their songs. But, it is important to understand that this type of disapproval is completely unwarranted, as musicians are certainly not expected to propose sound policies in their work. The purpose of such music is merely to raise consciousness and promote discussions about issues through a medium that is more accessible and less censored.

That said, the underlying problem of Anohni's debut album is not that she does not complement her observations with robust solutions, but that she tries to encourage discussions about issues of layered complexity with haste and no tact. Had she dedicated more time towards developing nuanced and mature lyrics, the album could have easily become an indispensable component of leftwing music.

It would be unfair, however, to give her no credit. The album's political content certainly should have been crafted with more care, but Anohni's courage to lyrically tackle global issues as an openly transgender artist through a new musical genre deserves unequivocal praise. At its best, *Hopelessness* should be appreciated for its strong, albeit latent, message — that humanity must stand united, more so now than ever before.



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Berezin to be head of Random

The new heads of Random Hall will be Jared and Laurie Berezin.

Jared, who will be succeeding longtime head of house Nina Davis-Millis, teaches in a variety of communication-intensive courses, including 2.009 and 6.033, according to the website for MIT Comparative Media Studies and Writing.

Random's current RLAD, Michael Barcelo, will be departing for a job as Resident Director at Emerson College in Boston. His last day will be July 15.

These announcements come at a time of turmoil for the dorm, with residents temporarily relocated to New House after a fire damaged the roof of the building.

Random's house team, which consists of the heads of house, an RLAD, and three GRTs, is in major flux. Out of this past year's team, only one member (a GRT) will be continuing his tenure at Random. Of the other GRTs, one graduated, and one decided not to continue in her graduate program at the Institute.

—Emma Bingham

Barnhart does not claim SH is cause of low grad rates

Chancellor: we're 'just pointing to data that is really troubling'

By Emma Bingham and Karleigh Moore
EDITORS

Following Chancellor Barnhart's announcement June 10 that Senior House would not be permitted to house freshmen in the fall due to exceptionally low graduation rates, many students voiced concerns about the data analysis which led to the response, the future of GRTs in the dorm, and in particular, the effect of the policy against freshmen. The Tech spoke again with Barnhart to address these issues.

Senior House also put together their official response, led by president Sarah Melvin '18. The response includes an open letter and petition, as well as a collection of letters submitted by the community.

The data on Senior House: causation and transparency

The Senior House community and others expressed many concerns about what they saw as a lack of sufficient data analysis. They were concerned that the analysis did not account for self-selection into Senior House and lower graduation rates among underrepresented minorities, low-income groups, and the LGBTQ community. They also asked whether more data would be released to the public, expressing worries about transparency.

Chancellor Barnhart PhD '88 said she and others have done "a lot of extensive analysis" that she did not share in her initial email to the community. She plans to share all of her data and analysis with Senior House residents and with the turnaround team she will be assembling. She said she does not want to release it to the MIT community at large because she wants "to be careful about privacy and stigmatism."

When asked about whether she and her team were able to show that Senior House caused lower academic performance, she said they were "not proving causation … just pointing to data that is really troubling." They have tried hard to "understand [the problem] more deeply" and to figure out if they can "point to something around causation," but they still "can't explain why the graduation rates are what they are."

"This is MIT's mission. We owe it to every student to have the opportunity for an excellent education," she said.

However, she wanted to emphasize that they "weren't trying to define success."

"We aren't saying that everyone follows the same path, and we surely aren't saying that students who take leaves and follow alternative paths are a problem."

She briefly discussed her analysis of graduation rates based on gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, LGBTQ identity, and more. She said that graduation rates for disadvantaged groups across MIT were higher than rates for those groups at Senior House. It's "the same really large gap," she said, "so again, that's very troubling."

The chancellor also responded to claims that the decision about Senior House will put LGBTQ freshman "at risk." Barnhart references survey responses that show that there are other dorms with a significant LGBTQ population and that members of the LGBTQ community living in these other dorms respond affirmatively to questions such as "I feel at home in my community," "I feel I have friends I can talk to," and "I feel supported."

The response from Senior House

Senior House president Sarah Melvin '18 released an open letter in which she countered some of the chancellor's proposals with suggestions of her own.

Melvin agreed that increased student support and mental health services would be a great benefit to residents, and noted that these services should be expanded to include all dorms. She suggested increased drug and alcohol safety resources, a peer tutoring program, study spaces in Senior House, an alumni-student mentorship program, and a freshman mentorship program.

She also created a petition, now linked from the Senior House website. The petition condemned the lack of student input into the process that led to the announcement of the Senior House turnaround and called for the administration to "pause the planned changes to Senior House, and 'start from the drawing board' with a truly inclusive process that will aim to improve academic progress at Senior House, as well as address the specific needs of diverse student populations in all of MIT."

UA president Sophia Liu '17 sent an email to undergraduates urging them to support Senior House by signing the petition or submitting a letter of support.

In her open letter, Melvin also called for freshman to be allowed to FYRE into Senior House this fall, despite the fact that no freshman will be placed there initially. She says that freshman will "[r]evitalize the community, direct its growth, and are most capable of designing a positive future for the dorm."

The chancellor says that MIT

Barnhart, Page 10

No freshmen will be living in Senior House this coming fall

Chancellor Barnhart cited graduation rates and drug use as main motivators for planned changes in dorm

By Emma Bingham and Karleigh Moore
EDITORS

Chancellor Barnhart PhD '88 announced June 10 that no freshmen will be housed in Senior House this fall, citing a comparatively low four-year graduation rate and ongoing problems with illegal drug use. The dorm will receive new live-in staff and mental health resources, and a turnaround team will work to address perceived problems.

The chancellor released statistics she called "alarming": Senior House has a four-year graduation rate of 59.7% compared to MIT's overall 83.7% rate, and 21.1% of students who have lived in Senior House have not received a degree; MIT-wide, that number is 7.7%.

Each of the four "east side" dorms (East Campus, Random, Senior House, and Bexley) had lower graduation rates than any West Campus dorm.

For the purpose of these statistics, students were categorized by where they lived the first semester of their freshman year.

When asked in an interview whether selection bias may be contributing to this data, Barnhart said it is "something [they] will look at" and that she anticipated that students would have "all kinds of ideas."

Barnhart outlined a three-part plan for Senior House: the dorm will open in the fall with an enhanced house team, a turnaround committee will be formed, and no freshmen will be permitted to live in the dorm this fall.

The house team will include additional live-in staff and new student support services, including a dedicated mental health clinician and an S^3 dean.

> **"If the culture is one that doesn't lead to academic success and wellbeing, yeah, true, we do want to end those cultures."**

In the future, Barnhart said, they might work on providing additional "satellite" mental health resources that dorms can share. She has already been talking about this with Head of East Campus Rob Miller '95, who asked if East Campus could share Senior House's new resources.

"I think one good outcome of [the plans for Senior House] will be that we will brainstorm about what things we can do, they'll apply to many of the living residences," the chancellor said.

The turnaround committee, which Barnhart herself will chair, has not been assembled yet, but the chancellor said it will include "a strong representation of Senior House students" and a number of faculty, particularly those faculty who were undergraduates at MIT.

However, she said she sees the turnaround team as just "the nucleus of the activity … [just] a piece of the overall group of people who will be involved in this." She said that "suggestions will certainly be welcome."

In addition, she hopes faculty, especially faculty who are former Senior House residents, will help bridge the gap between the administration and current Senior House residents. Senior House is known for its opposition to the administration — for example, its strong resistance to administrative changes such as the addition of the RLAD position to the house team.

Regarding the decision not to place freshmen in Senior House in the fall, she said she feels it is the administration's "responsibility to provide students with an environment where [they] can succeed academically," and that Senior House was not providing such an environment. Therefore, the decision was made not to allow new freshmen.

She said it was "difficult to say" whether freshmen will be allowed to live in Senior House in 2017-2018. However, she added: "The whole purpose of this effort is to think about a plan for success. This is not a plan for closure."

The chancellor estimates that there will be around 30 empty slots in Senior House come fall, as the dorm generally receives around 30 freshman each year. Barnhart said that specific plans for the space have not been decided, but mentioned that the empty rooms could be used for space where mental health practitioners and S^3 deans could hold office hours for residents. Some of the rooms might even be appropriated for art studio space, Barnhart said, citing that data shows that Senior House residents have an "especially strong appreciation for the arts."

As for whether or not upperclassmen can transfer into Senior House given the empty rooms, the chancellor says that in order to "double down on support" for residents, "it might make sense to keep the community the size that it is" instead of bringing in more students. However, the chancellor doesn't have a definite answer to this question.

The main issue Barnhart cited in her letter to the community besides graduation rates was the amount of illegal drug use that occurs in Senior House. She told The Tech that "MIT doesn't condone" drug use, saying that it "doesn't align with [MIT's] core values." She added that she has "seen firsthand how destructive drug use" can be for a community and that MIT "cares about the wellbeing" of its community.

She said she sees efforts to curb illegal drug use at Senior House as attempts to help students "be both well and academically successful" and "if that is seen as cracking down on drugs, then I guess that's cracking down on drugs."

> **"If that is seen as cracking down on drugs, then I guess that's cracking down on drugs."**

The chancellor emphasized that clarifying the help-seeking policy (also called the Good Samaritan policy) will be a top priority, saying that the policy is "critical to moving forward." She and incoming Vice President for Student Life Suzy Nelson will work together to revise the policy. They aim to release the new policy by September 1, before students return for the fall semester.

Immediately following the chancellor's email to Senior House residents, students began to voice concerns about future dorm crowding and claimed that the moratorium on Senior House gaining freshman constituted an attack on dorm culture.

The chancellor states that this is not a punitive measure; rather, it is a move to support dorm residents and foster academic success and community wellbeing.

"I think one thing I'd like to say about this is I hope that students don't hear this and say 'oh here's the first step to kill culture at MIT.' That is not at all what we are trying to do," Barnhart said. "There are great aspects of culture at Senior House. We want to bolster those aspects of the culture. [But] if the culture is one that doesn't lead to academic success and wellbeing, yeah, true, we do want to end those cultures."

"We appreciate and we know how much students appreciate the fact that we have dorms with different cultures that we celebrate," she said.

Barnhart also wanted to emphasize a collaborative approach to problem-solving. She said abrupt decision-making was "not the way we [at MIT] approach problems." She discussed her plans for Senior House with the heads of house in every dorm as well as a number of faculty and staff around campus. She wants to "engage the community."

"Do I think there are things we can do at MIT that might be good for student life? Yep, I do. What I can say is the plan is to work with [students]. I figure you have some ideas too."

William Navarre contributed reporting.

DSL reorganizes its services

Reorganization will 'improve collaboration and coordination' among the offices of the Division

DSL, from Page 1

ly. James Collins and Gerardo Garcia-Rios, currently assistant deans in S3, will serve as interim co-directors of that office.

The additions to DSL were announced the same day that Suzy Nelson, new vice president and dean for student life, began her term.

"The chancellor has made it clear that there is no higher priority for DSL than student wellness and support," Nelson told MIT News. "This realignment will allow for new ideas, relationships, and connections to emerge within DSL and between DUE, ODGE, MIT Medical, and Mental Health and Counseling Service so we can serve all MIT students better."

—Katherine Nazemi

Freshman year reflections

Looking back on a lot of cookie dough

By Nina M. Lutz

Every Friday I walk this campus backwards. Not because I'm crazy or want a good workout, but because I'm a tour guide. At the beginning of every tour, we introduce ourselves. It wasn't until recently that I found myself saying I'm a rising sophomore. Which still sounds really weird, especially looking back at the whirlwind that was freshman year.

I was admitted into MIT on Early Action. I never really gave it a second thought and committed instantly. I fell in love with this place during CPW. I started my freshman year with a supportive community at MacGregor, great friends, and an advisor I really liked. I was excited for a new adventure.

I had it all planned out: I was going to relax first semester and learn how to MIT. I'd go to Boston every weekend and hang out with my friends. I'd get a UROP during IAP, have a great second term, and probably either UROP or try to get an internship for the summer.

If there's one thing that MIT has taught me, it's to not plan too much.

I failed the first 8.01 exam. I got a solid 24 out of 100. I got a concussion the third week of the semester, the night before my 18.02A exam. My neighbor, a sophomore I barely knew, rode in the ambulance with me and we got back at 5 a.m. We're close friends now and took 6.004 together last semester.

I felt defeated in a lot of ways. No matter how many hours I poured into psets and studying, I could barely pass my classes. I felt the embarrassment of No Recording a class and scraping by with a lot of C's when so many of my friends sailed through, seemingly unscathed. MacGregor's shelves had only succeeded in accumulating dust and giving me a head injury. And, of course, I had the typical struggles and crises that leave you sitting in the hallway at an unreasonable hour, eating Cookie Butter out of a jar with your neighbor.

Second semester was difficult, too. I had a lot going on in terms of my own health and things erupting at home. Sometimes it's hard to be in two places at once. I felt stretched thin, like a rubber band used as a temporary fix.

I soon found myself touching base regularly with MIT Mental Health and my dean at S^3. I learned to cut myself a break. Lots of breaks.

When you come to MIT, upperclassmen tell you this place is hard. What they don't tell you is that it isn't hard for everyone at the same time or in the same ways.

Freshman year is an unpredictable hurricane of new. It's a big change, made harder by challenging classes in areas you may not care for. It's drinking from a firehose, and when you can finally squint past the water, you realize everyone else cleverly engineered wells and filters and you're the idiot who wore a white T-shirt.

Despite all this, I didn't hate my freshman year. And I can't hate MIT. I never could. This place means a lot to me. I love it here. Just not for the reasons that my nice plan would have had me believe.

In November, I got a UROP at the MIT Media Lab. I love the Media Lab; it's my favorite place on campus, and that was the first brick in the new foundation of my MIT experience.

I had an amazing supervisor, and I found everyone in the group so interesting. It was the place I looked forward to going to every week and contributing to. My group was nice enough to include me in Members' Week, where I got to present some of the things I had worked on, help run the demos, and eat fancy food.

I took photos and wrote some articles for The Tech. I learned how to walk backwards and share my love of MIT (and bad jokes about Harvard) to the general public.

I made amazing friends. I've never been surrounded by so many supportive people in my life. I have at least five people I can call 24/7, and they will drop what they're doing and actually help get me through whatever I need to do.

Upperclassmen got me through crisis after crisis: whether it was those first psets or deciding majors or helping me to believe that someday I would be able to do this.

The only reason anyone makes it through MIT is because of the people here.

People who will lead you on adventures at 2 a.m. and show you the crazy projects they've created, whether it be the headphones they made from scratch or the hammock in their room. People who will order late night froyo with you after you fail an exam. People who will help you on a pset that's due the next day, even though it's 10 p.m. and you've just started. We're not just brains, we're heart.

I was reminded of this in April when, after the thrill of Members' Week — while I was debating majors, having a crisis over the fact that I failed almost every exam in the past year, and thinking I probably couldn't withstand a technical major here — I ended up in Professor Bove's office.

Bove assured me that I wasn't crazy and told me that people major in all types of things at MIT. Some people major in research. Some people major in sports. Some people major in startups. Other people major in The Tech. What goes on your certificate doesn't really define your education.

The realization that MIT is a create your own adventure and (provided that you eventually pass everything and don't do anything illegal) that there is no right or wrong way to do it was a big deal for me.

There's no real way for me to say exactly what freshman year taught me. It's a hodgepodge of moments and lessons. So many that I want to freeze them and put them in glass bottles on my shelves, because I found myself the happiest I've ever been during my time here.

I can honestly say that I am a very different person from the me that entered MIT, and I'm different from who I thought I would be. And I can honestly say that I'm thankful for so much that happened over the course of this year.

There's still a lot I don't know. But I do know that I have truly found paradise. And that's enough for me.

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Unclear if capacity of Senior House will take long-term hit

'Let's hit the pause button, let's focus on the community members'

Barnhart, from Page 8

realizes that students care deeply about having freshman in their dorms, but that "in light of the data that we have, we don't feel we can look [new students] in the eye and assure them that [if they live in] Senior House that we can provide them the experience we believe MIT should provide every student."

"What we're saying is, let's hit the pause button, let's focus on the community members, let's understand the underlying problems."

Barnhart said that only six freshmen ranked Senior House as their top choice in the summer housing lottery.

> **"I hope that the end result is that we will see improvements across the board."**

Further concerns: GRTs, space, and cost

The chancellor also addressed concerns about what would happen to the Senior House GRTs and their partners. She said the three (out of four) who aren't graduating this year have all been invited back to be GRTs in Senior House for the upcoming year.

Barnhart said this "could be a more intensive year for the GRTs" and they are "working with them to define specifically what that means in terms of time commitment and responsibilities to make sure that everyone is on the same page about what it is we need to do to support the students."

The GRTs also face challenges in terms of physical space in Senior House. The new enhanced house team might displace some of them from their apartments. Plans are being worked out as to where they could be placed instead. These plans will depend on what decisions are made about the use of spaces in the dorm and how quickly new spaces can be constructed.

One of the options offered to the Senior House GRTs was to resign their positions. If they were to take this option, they would still be paid their stipend and given free housing in a graduate dorm.

Barnhart said she did not mean for the community to interpret this offer as a sign that they were trying to push the GRTs out. That was "not at all what that was meant to say," she said. She simply wanted to "provide GRTs with information" and not "force [them] to do something [they] don't want to do" (i.e. participate in the Senior House turnaround).

It is unclear as of yet whether the capacity of Senior House will permanently decrease due to changes in the spaces there. It will depend upon how feasible it is to create temporary spaces to accommodate new live-in staff that could be converted back to student spaces.

The chancellor also wanted to reassure the community that the cost of living in Senior House would not increase due to the changes.

Could this happen in other dorms?

Some students have expressed concern that other east side dorms might soon face similar action because together Senior House, Random Hall, East Campus, and Bexley Hall had the lowest four graduation rates according to the data released by the chancellor's office.

However, the chancellor said "this isn't a mission to get graduation rates up" and they're not "measuring the success of MIT … or individuals by these graduation rate statistics."

She said other heads of house see this as an opportunity for them and their students to examine what could be improved in their own dorms. Both students and heads of house have asked for resources such as increased access to mental health services, improved spaces for studying, and better spaces for holding large group gatherings.

"I hope that the end result is that we will see improvements across the board that students want and will be driving that process," Barnhart said.

William Navarre contributed reporting.

Nelson finds MIT comm. welcoming

Nelson: 'I can already tell that the people make this place special'

Nelson, from Page 1

"I got two beautiful bouquets of flowers from the chancellor and members of the DSL staff. Someone also left me a very cool hand-made MIT T-shirt, with some cookies and a mystery note, signed by 'J', that welcomed me to MIT. I would like to thank the author of the note, baker of the cookies, and designer of the T-shirt, if I can find out who made them."

She has met with various students, faculty, and staff and said she "can already tell that the people make this place special."

"I guess what surprised me about MIT given this is a fairly large school (especially when compared with Colgate) is that the people here are as warm, friendly and helpful to newcomers. It has made my transition that much easier."

She said that her favorite part of her job is being able to work with students.

Nelson previously served as the vice president and dean of the college at Colgate University. She has held positions at Syracuse and Cornell, and was dean of student life at Harvard.

The beginning of her tenure also marks a reorganization in DSL, which involved moving S3, VPR, SDS, and CDSA into the division. These groups will now report to Nelson.

Katherine Nazemi contributed reporting.

Melvin worries admins value culture less than students do

All GRTs to stay on for fall, new live-in support team to be selected over summer with input from students

Senior House, from Page 1

The chancellor did not confirm the use of any specific survey, but MIT's Institutional Research website hosts information about two recent surveys: the Healthy Minds survey (results) conducted in 2015 and the National College Health Assessment (results) conducted in 2013. Both surveys had questions about drug use and questions about mental health.

"I would support the administration releasing the names and dates of surveys that influenced this decision. I think the MIT community deserves to know how these surveys are being used," Melvin said.

However, Senior House president Sarah Melvin '18 says, the "purpose of MIT student life and mental health surveys is to inform administrative decisions that aim to improve student life and build better support structures on campus."

> **"It's hard to feel included in a decision if the decision has already been made without your consultation."**

Melvin also added that she is concerned that students might be less honest on future MIT surveys in light of the actions taken based on these previous surveys.

"The problem is that while many residents see the administration's actions as punitive, the administration views the changes to Senior House as student support," Melvin said.

Indeed, Barnhart told The Tech that the policies being implemented at Senior House are intended to improve learning and living environments, "not hurt or punish … residents."

The administration will offer no further public comment on drug use, the chancellor said stating that Senior House leadership agrees that "[a] public debate is not helpful or productive for" students.

Melvin agrees. She explained, "It seems that the administration has long been concerned that Senior House actively encourages drug use and that the data is an excuse for intervention rather than a deciding factor. Therefore I don't think it's productive to focus future conversations on the data."

Melvin does not want data to be released publicly. She worries that it could "be used to draw false conclusions about individual residents," and she again emphasized that it is "not productive to focus [the] discussion on how data was gathered and used."

The community responds

Shortly after the announcement was made, John Hinsdale '86, who lived in Senior House, initiated a petition opposing the moratorium on freshman in Senior House this fall. It has since gathered nearly 500 signatures from current and former residents as well as students across campus.

Some students were displeased that MIT emailed the MIT community, Senior House parents, and Senior House residents at the same time. Some students felt it inappropriate to email parents implying that drug use is a particular problem in Senior House.

Students voiced concerns that other dorms with lower graduation rates would face similar action in the future, notably, the "east side" dorms had the lowest graduation rates. Apart from having the lowest graduation rate among the dorms, Melvin says that Senior House has a "more negative reputation than the other East Side dorms" and says that she believes that this reputation was a "contributing factor in this decision" to ban Senior House from having freshmen this fall.

"I'm concerned in general for East Side culture at MIT. East Campus and Random are old buildings, and I fear that MIT won't put in the time and money to preserve their cultures if the buildings need major repairs … I worry that the administration doesn't place the same value on dorm culture and history that students and alumni do," Melvin added.

Concerns about lack of student involvement

Many students have expressed concerns that student leaders and GRTs appeared to have little to no warning about this decision, let alone a voice in the decision-making process.

No student leaders were consulted during the decision-making process. DormCon leadership found out about the decision from the emails sent to the MIT community, and had no prior warning, DormCon president Kate Farris '17 told The Tech in an email.

"[Chancellor Barnhart] has been frank about her concerns that student leadership would have blocked the process or breached confidentiality rather than work with the administration," Melvin said, explaining the lack of student involvement.

Melvin said that Barnhart has since apologized for "her lack of faith" and has assured student leaders that they will not be "left in the dark again."

"I think this was handled incredibly poorly and that this process was offensive to student government. It is not enough for administrators to apologize for not including students, going forward they must actively work to reestablish trust and ensure this doesn't happen again," Melvin said.

Melvin went on to underscore her disappointment with the chancellor by referencing an interview The Tech had with Barnhart when she was first appointed chancellor. In the interview, Barnhart emphasised that the "culture of student self-governance" on campus was important and "anything … that [MIT does] has to include students, has to include a grassroots effort with the students."

"I think it's important for the chancellor to remember what she said when she first took the position," Melvin said. "It seems that she has strayed from this initial intention, and I am greatly saddened by this."

"The chancellor has reassured us that students will not be left out again, but why was our input initially disregarded if she truly believes in the importance of self-governance at MIT?" Melvin said. "It's hard to feel included in a decision if the decision has already been made without your consultation."

Like Melvin and other Senior House student leaders, DormCon was not included in any decision making regarding Senior House. Farris said that DormCon will help Senior House in whatever way it can and that if other dorms are interested in receiving additional support services like Senior House, DormCon will work with the dorm presidents to do so.

Farris echoed Melvin's concerns about student involvement and transparency saying that DormCon "wish[ed] that students had been consulted and included in the process sooner." Farris also said that the Chancellor promised that going forward, the process will be more transparent and that "the residents of Senior House will be fully involved in it."

Going forward

"Senior House residents have responded to this call to action with a commitment to moving forward rather than debating how we got here. I'm grateful to them for that," Barnhart said.

Melvin said that the turnaround efforts should focus should be on providing better support for Senior House in order to make positive change so that the dorm can take freshmen in the future. Additionally, Melvin said that MIT needs to ensure that students have input on similar decisions in the future and to make sure that "student voices are not neglected at any stage."

"[T]he administration needs to establish clear goals and metrics for what the community needs to accomplish in order to welcome freshmen once again," Melvin said.

Students and GRTs from Senior House will work with faculty and staff on a search committee for the live-in members of the house team. The chancellor hopes to complete the search process over the summer so that the enhanced house team will be in place to support Senior House residents by the start of the fall.

All GRTs who were slated to return to Senior House in the 2016-2017 school year have accepted their return offers.

> **Notably, east side dorms had the lowest graduation rates.**

The new members of the house team will live on the first floor of the dorm, and MIT is working with the Senior House community to create and improve other spaces in the building such as study rooms, meeting spaces, and rooms for the drop-in support services.

"[W]e are going to do our very best to ensure that major construction is wrapped up before classes start in the fall," the chancellor said.

Barnhart has identified several areas of focus for the Senior House turnaround team, including "academic wellbeing, mental and physical wellbeing, community, safety, self-governance, and turnaround progress."

Moving forward, Melvin says that Senior House needs to work on gaining the "trust and respect of the administration" by sharing the positive aspects of their community while pushing back against negative misconceptions that have "historically enshrouded" the dorm.

Melvin worries that the reputation of Senior House was factored into recent decisions, saying that the rumors rarely reflect reality.

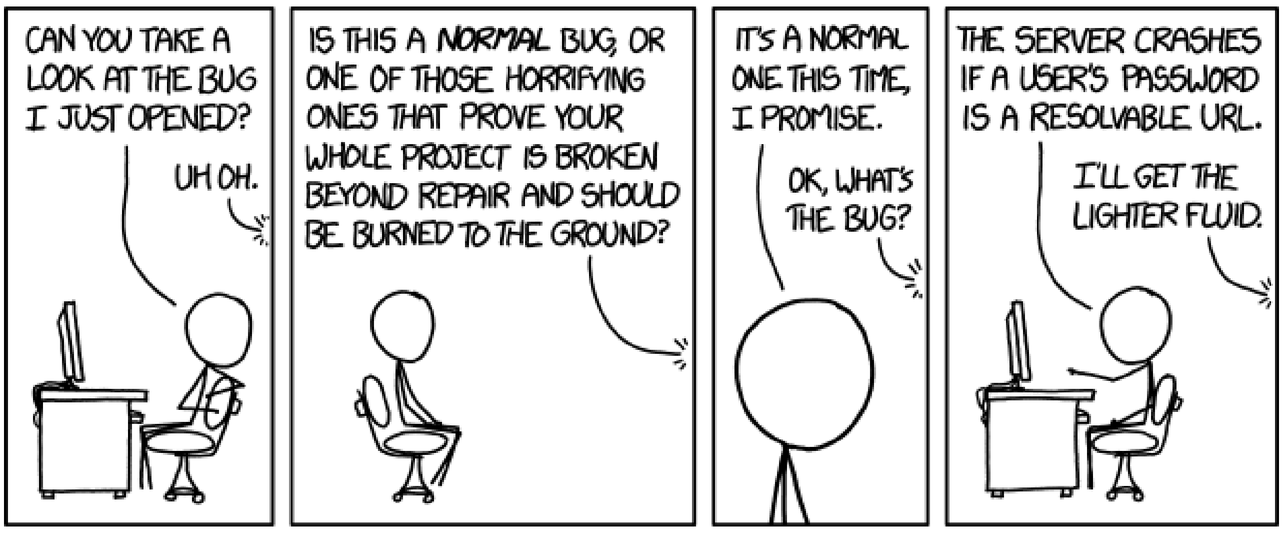
"Some think Senior House today is like the wild parties described in the stories of nostalgic alumni. I've also heard Senior House described as a 'drug den' by non-residents, and I doubt that these individuals have actually spent much time in our home."

xkcd

A WEBCOMIC OF ROMANCE, SARCASM, MATH, AND LANGUAGE

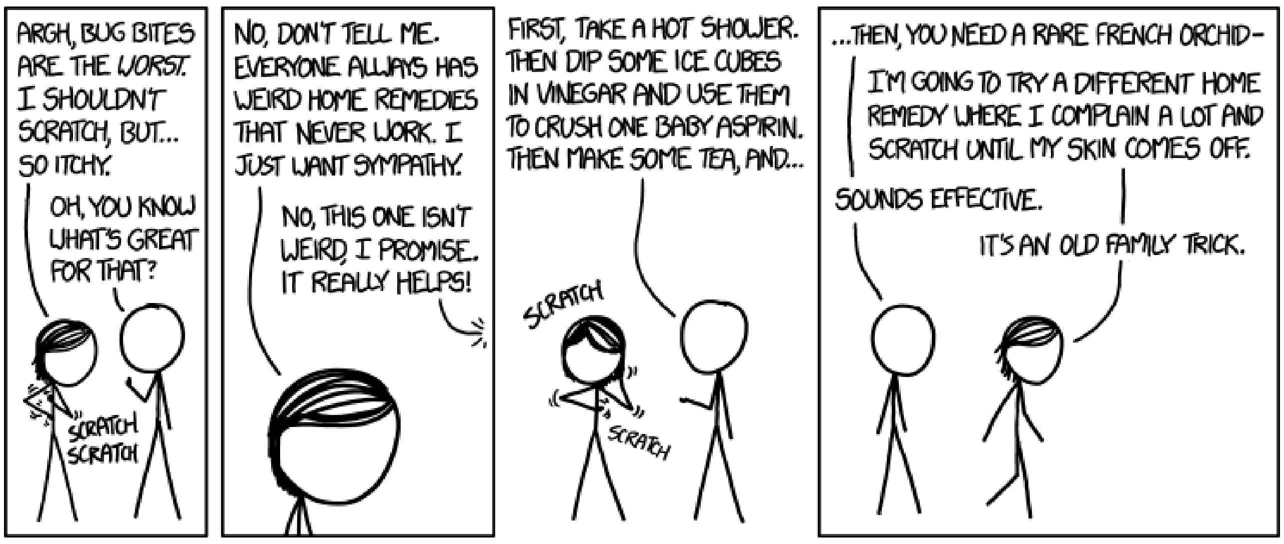
by Randall Munroe

[1700] New Bug


CAN YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THE BUG I JUST OPENED?
UH OH.
IS THIS A *NORMAL* BUG, OR ONE OF THOSE HORRIFYING ONES THAT PROVE YOUR WHOLE PROJECT IS BROKEN BEYOND REPAIR AND SHOULD BE BURNED TO THE GROUND?
IT'S A NORMAL ONE THIS TIME, I PROMISE.
OK, WHAT'S THE BUG?
THE SERVER CRASHES IF A USER'S PASSWORD IS A RESOLVABLE URL.
I'LL GET THE LIGHTER FLUID.

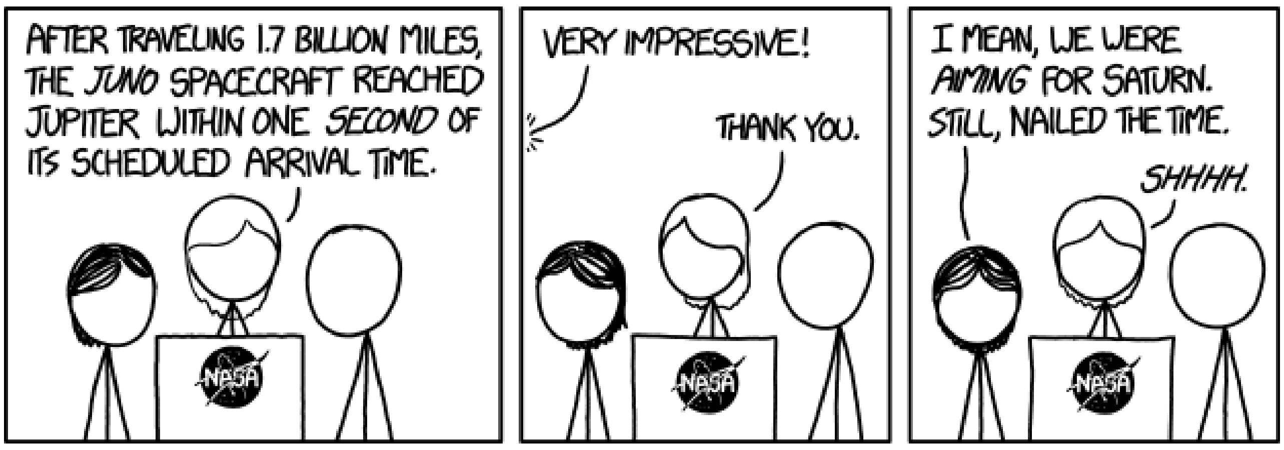
There's also a unicode-handling bug in the URL request library, and we're storing the passwords unsalted ... so if we salt them with emoji, we can close three issues at once!

[1702] Home Itch Remedies


ARGH, BUG BITES ARE THE *WORST*. I SHOULDN'T SCRATCH, BUT... SO ITCHY.
OH, YOU KNOW WHAT'S GREAT FOR THAT?
SCRATCH SCRATCH
NO, DON'T TELL ME. EVERYONE ALWAYS HAS WEIRD HOME REMEDIES THAT NEVER WORK. I JUST WANT SYMPATHY.
NO, THIS ONE ISN'T WEIRD, I PROMISE. IT REALLY HELPS!
FIRST, TAKE A HOT SHOWER. THEN DIP SOME ICE CUBES IN VINEGAR AND USE THEM TO CRUSH ONE BABY ASPIRIN. THEN MAKE SOME TEA, AND...
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
...THEN, YOU NEED A RARE FRENCH ORCHID–
I'M GOING TO TRY A DIFFERENT HOME REMEDY WHERE I COMPLAIN A LOT AND SCRATCH UNTIL MY SKIN COMES OFF.
SOUNDS EFFECTIVE.
IT'S AN OLD FAMILY TRICK.

In my experience, mosquitos and poison ivy are bad, but the very worst itch comes from bites from chiggers (Trombicula alfreddugesi). They're found across the American south and great plains, so the best home remedy is to move to Iceland.

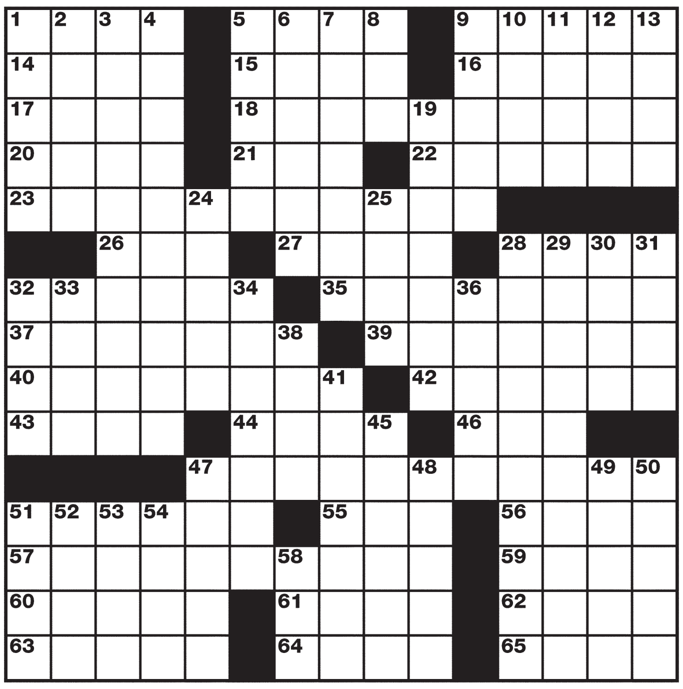
[1703] Juno


AFTER TRAVELING 1.7 BILLION MILES, THE *JUNO* SPACECRAFT REACHED JUPITER WITHIN ONE *SECOND* OF ITS SCHEDULED ARRIVAL TIME.
NASA
VERY IMPRESSIVE!
THANK YOU.
NASA
I MEAN, WE WERE *AIMING* FOR SATURN. STILL, NAILED THE TIME.
SHHHH.
NASA

„The name wasn't a tip-off?" „Honestly, at first I thought you were saying 'Juneau'. A gravity assist seemed like a weird way to get to Alaska, but I figured it must be more efficient or something."

Saturday Stumper by Matthew Sewell

Solution, page 12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47 48 49 50
51 52 53 54 55 56
57 58 59
60 61 62
63 64 65

ACROSS
1 Idiosyncrasies
5 Buckle
9 Lay away
14 Its flag has four crescents
15 Elizabeth knighted him in '59 for "services to the arts"
16 Shadow-box piece
17 Certain state-run game
18 Evokes recollection
20 Consumed by
21 Ever-increasing statistic
22 It's debated in song in Hamilton
23 Self-starter's byword
26 Batman v Superman villain
27 Public transportation to Wimbledon
28 Ecstatic
32 Many an eco-house
35 Bypass via the high way
37 Wound or unwound
39 Colleague of Émile's who signed his Dreyfus manifesto
40 Aeschylus trilogy that inspired Mourning Becomes Electra
42 California company with a Rocket Road address
43 Lippy or cheeky
44 Brilliant circle
46 Modern __
47 '94 Oscar nominee as Jo March
51 Train technology
55 End of a shift
56 Meeting places
57 Extravagant
59 Exit events for some VCs
60 Dashing
61 Cliché drawing time
62 Insulate
63 Airbnb listing
64 "__ these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me": Lazarus
65 Builder of the last London Olympics' rowing venue

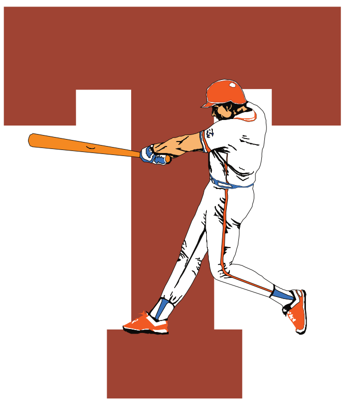
DOWN
1 Carvings first made as boundary markers
2 Madame Curie daughter
3 Construction support
4 Mind number
5 Word derived from an alchemist's measure
6 Settle down
7 Parquetry supplies
8 12-lead test
9 Redoubtable
10 Project Mercury food source
11 Confines
12 Grains larger than sand
13 __ orders
19 Rose holders
24 Take to the next level
25 Cloud composition
28 Burr, for one
29 Tapas garnish
30 A subject of Warhol's "Athlete Series"
31 Green beast in Toy Story
32 Coin for David Copperfield, say
33 Inimitable
34 Temptation for Pooh
36 It might be ruled by a professor
38 Name in the subtitle of the bio Woman in the Mists
41 Song performed at both Obama inaugural parades
45 Possible pickup limit
47 Single-minded about
48 Polish
49 Word on motel-chain listings
50 Clear of the horizon
51 Bottom-drawer label, perhaps
52 Angry Birds birds, essentially
53 Gangster film stock character
54 Tarzan title
58 Grp. dealing with drips

Major League Baseball All-Star Game team members, as voted by fans, were revealed July 5

Game will take place July 12 in San Diego, controversy brews over fan voting practices, should players and managers choose all-star teams instead of the fans?

By Ahaan Rungta
Sports Writer

With the Major League Baseball season about halfway to completion, the best players at each position get to showcase their prowess at the 2016 MLB All-Star Game.



This year's midsummer classic will take place at Petco Park in San Diego, California, on July 12, a day after the home run derby. MLB fans voted online until the weekend of Independence Day for who they thought was the best position player at each position for each league.

On Tuesday, July 5, the starting lineups for the 87th All-Star game, chosen by the fans, and the pitchers and reserves, chosen by the managers and fellow players, were announced.

The Boston Red Sox and Chicago Cubs dominated the all-star rosters as the starting lineups will contain four members of the Red Sox and five members of the Cubs. Additionally, Red Sox starting pitcher Steven Wright and closer Craig Kimbrel were also selected for the American League roster, while Cubs starting pitchers Jake Arrieta and Jon Lester made the cut for the National League.

Manager Ned Yost of the American League has not yet made a decision about who he will use as the starter for the exhibition, but purely based off statistics, it is reasonable to speculate that it will be White Sox ace Chris Sale, who holds a 14-2 record with a 2.93 ERA through his first 17 starts of the season. His main competition, knuckleballer Steven Wright, possessed the lowest ERA in the American League for a large chunk of the first half of the season. He was recently overtaken in that category by Danny Salazar of the Cleveland Indians.

> **Have the statistics speak for themselves — the players and managers understand them and are not corrupt, so let them do the decision-making.**

It remains to be seen who starts the all-star game for the AL, but it is possible that Wright's possession of the knuckleball could play a role in how he is used in the game. Starting catcher Salvador Perez has remarked that he has little experience in catching the knuckleball, but it should be a fun experience. A change of mitt midgame might be all that's in store for Perez, but it is eventually up to Yost to decide how he mixes up his all-star pitchers.

On the NL side, manager Terry Collins, who has several aces at his disposal, said that he will not reveal who he will use as the starting pitcher for the all-star game. Understandably, the decision for Collins is tough. With Clayton Kershaw of the Dodgers currently on the disabled list, Jake Arrieta (Cubs), Madison Bumgarner (Giants), Noah Syndergaard (Mets), and Johnny Cueto (Giants) are all contenders.

If defending NL Cy Young winner Arrieta gets the start, the National League will see their entire infield except the catcher be representatives of the Cubs, while only C Buster Posey (Giants), OF Yoenis Cespedes (Mets), and OF Bryce Harper (Nationals) make it to the starting lineup of the National League All-Stars without being from the Cubs.

The Cubs have become the only team in MLB history other than the 1963 Cardinals to start all four infielders in the All-Star Game. On Tuesday, we will find out which league will claim home field advantage for the 2016 World Series.

Fans have one last chance to vote in a player to Petco Park this all-star week by phone or online in what MLB calls the "#FinalVote."

Competing for that spot in the American League are Tigers 2B Ian Kinsler, Rays 3B Evan Longoria, Red Sox 2B Dustin Pedroia, Blue Jays OF Michael Saunders, and Astros OF George Springer.

The National League sees the final vote between Giants 1B Brandon Belt, Brewers OF Ryan Braun, Diamondbacks 3B Jake Lamb, Pirates OF Starling Marte, and Rockies SS Trevor Story.

Fans have until Friday, July 8, to vote their choice in.

With this year's rosters being dominated by Red Sox and Cubs, there was one man who silently had a big night — President of Baseball Operations for the Chicago Cubs, Theo Epstein. Of the seventeen position players announced as starters for the all-star game, nine were acquired by Epstein during his time with the Cubs or the Red Sox.

After becoming the youngest general manager in the history of MLB with the Red Sox, Epstein signed SS Xander Bogaerts and DH David Ortiz as free agents and drafted OF Jackie Bradley Jr., now-OF Mookie Betts, and 1B Anthony Rizzo.

After joining the Cubs organization, he reunited with Rizzo via a trade, drafted 3B/LF Kris Bryant, signed utility man Ben Zobrist and OF Dexter Fowler, and traded for SS Addison Russell. He is also responsible for 2016 all-stars Jake Arrieta, Jon Lester, and AL final-vote candidate Dustin Pedroia.

Meanwhile, the surge of the Cubs has raised many eyebrows about the All Star Game and Major League Baseball's true intention. A quick look at the 2016 All Star rosters reminds many of the 2015 American League roster, which consisted of seven Kansas City Royals. With the all-star starting lineups in the hands of fan voting, MLB seems to be sending a message about the all-star game — that it is for the fans.

Yet, the result of the all-star game, an exhibition game in which players on the same side have usually not worked together, directly decides which league gets home field advantage in the World Series, the ultimate in baseball.

The all-star game selection has not always been fan-based, but it's not the first time we've seen particular fanbases take control of the ballots. Until 1946, the managers had complete control over lineups and pitching. From 1947, fans got to pound the ballots. In 1957, the fanbase of the Cincinnati Reds conquered the voting when the National League starting lineup consisted of Cardinals legend Stan Musial and seven Reds. This incident forced then-commissioner of baseball Ford Frick to make some replacements and put players, coaches, and managers in control of voting for their all-star starters. This ended when, in 1970, fans regained control of position player selection and that is how it stands today.

> **During the past 47 years, "ballot box stuffing" has occurred a disturbing number of times.**

During the past 47 years under this ruling, "ballot box stuffing" has recurred a disturbing number of times, the most recent one being the 2015 Royals, whose fans sent eight as starters to the Cincinnati for the 86th midsummer classic. After accusations arose of bogus voting procedures, MLB cancelled 65 million votes, citing voting fraud. As a result, the Royals remained with four starters in the game, although OF Alex Gordon had to be replaced due to injury.

This alone brings up debate. If the Royals fans had not worked their players, deserving or not, into the all-star game, would the fraud votes have even come into light? The 2015 Royals was a case where some of their members were so blatantly non-deserving that MLB had to take a look at it, the best example being 2B Omar Infante, who was barely batting over the Mendoza line at the all-star break, or SS Alcides Escobar, who was inferior to Red Sox shortstop Xander Bogaerts in every offensive and defensive category at the break.

As former Cy Young winner, now Boston Red Sox player, David Price said in a tweet during the all-star break in 2015, "An all-star game is not a popularity contest – it's for home field advantage (for whatever reason) for the World Series! Best players play." Here, Price sums up all the contradictions that the current system. First, there's no obvious stream of logic that explains why an exhibition game decides home field advantage at the highest stage of baseball. Second, we are leaving it to the fans (likely to entertain them, somehow) to decide who gets to play in this game, even if the best player at a position doesn't get to play the all-star game.

The results of the 2016 all-star voting doesn't help this case, with SS Addison Russell and 2B Ben Zobrist both arguably not deserving of making the cut. In Russell's case, rookies SS Trevor Story (Rockies) and SS Corey Seager (Dodgers) have put up better numbers through the first half of the season than Russell, who owns a mediocre slash line of .242/.338/.416 and has unremarkable defense with 9 errors committed at short. Oh, and let's just forget the fact that Kris Bryant has played virtually never at third base this year, yet he is the starting third baseman in the all star game, not Arenado — the all-star game needs Bryant's offense, right?

With so many issues with the system concerning the deep implications of the all-star game and its result, it would be no easy task to make changes to the midsummer classic. With so many changes being made quickly to the game of baseball and many fans, players, and coaching personnel disagreeing on how baseball should be played, commissioner Rob Manfred is clearly open to change. With the revamped (timed) home run derby, the new safety rules for fans and players, and the acceptance of instant replay and its adjusted circumstances under Manfred's predecessor Bud Selig, the MLB seems like it is in the thick of reformation; and while Manfred is willing to be part of it, he has also implied that he is a fan of observation.

During the 2015 Royals controversy, he stated that he is "willing to see how fan voting turns out before worrying." However, shortly after his seemingly passive remarks, he stated: "What I would say is I hope over time that what people come to think about the commissioner's office is when we have a situation such as this -- this is one example -- that we are responsive and open to change if in fact it appears we get a result that is not consistent with the goals of the system that is currently in place."

Royals and AL All-Stars manager Ned Yost backed his team and the rules of MLB by saying "there's nothing wrong" with all the votes coming in and that if people want to fight the rules, they can just play along and vote more. Clearly there is a difference of opinions between players and managers – well, at least the Royals manager.

No doubt multiple commissioners of baseball, not just Manfred, have received concrete proposals on how to optimally go about the all-star game, quoting other leagues such as the NBA, NFL, and their own imagination, all of which seem irrelevant — baseball is its own sport. Nevertheless, here's one that seems to make sense — do away with having the fans decide who starts the all-star game, because there are way too many fans who are not going to vote for the player with the most caliber, but rather for their favorite person.

Instead, have the statistics speak for themselves — the players and managers understand them and are not corrupt, so let them do the decision-making. Meanwhile, if certain players don't get the nod at first and have to go into a final vote round, you can have the fans make the final call. As usual, let the pitchers be decided by the players and managers. The claim and hope is that fans will watch and attend the all-star game as they please whether or not they vote on who gets there.

Next, cut the cord between the all star game and the World Series. It serves no purpose, especially because fairytale stories of the first half don't always last until the postseason. It's a long season and a home run derby-winning Todd Frazier may blow his fuse midway through the second half. The players don't play the all-star game for the World Series home field advantage and the fans don't watch the amazing baseball between the best in the sport because they are hoping the National League team (whoever that is) gets one extra game at home.

Change needs to be made, and this is just one idea of many that Major League Baseball has to deal with. Loopholes in the league are regulation, especially when it comes to America's favorite pastime. But if you're going to make it entertaining, you might as well have it be fair and give the players equal opportunities to showcase their talents and careers. Either way, the All-Star game in San Diego should be a fun one watch, whether you are rooting for the American League or the National League, if you have any bias whatsoever.

Solution to Crossword

from page 11

T	I	C	S	■	C	A	V	E	■	S	T	A	S	H
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Are you a tetris ninja?

Use your powers for good!

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